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THE

GOOD OLD TIMES:

THE

Story of the Manchester Rebels of '45.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH,

AUTHOR OF

"BOSCOBEL," "TOWER OF LONDON," &c. &c.

With faltering voice, she weeping said,
"O, Dawson, monarch of my heart!
Think not thy death shall end our loves,
For thou and I will never part!"

SHENSTONE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1873.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

BOOK II.—*continued.*

PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD IN MANCHESTER.

IX.

PAGE

ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST DIVISION OF THE HIGHLAND ARMY. LORD GEORGE MURRAY 3

X.

THE DUKE OF PERTH 9

XI.

ARRIVAL OF THE SECOND DIVISION 15

XII.

THE YOUNG CHEVALIER 20

XIII.

THE PRINCE'S INTERVIEW WITH MRS. BUTLER AND THE TWO DAMSELS 31

XIV.

PAGE

THE PRINCE'S MARCH TO HEAD-QUARTERS . . . 40

XV.

THE PRINCE'S LEVÉE 47

XVI.

THE ILLUMINATIONS 64

XVII.

A QUARREL AT SUPPER 72

XVIII.

CAPTAIN WEIR 79

XIX.

CAPTAIN WEIR IS INTERROGATED BY THE PRINCE . . 98

XX.

THE DUEL 104

XXI.

CASTLE FIELD 114

XXII.

FATHER JEROME COUNSELS SIR RICHARD . . . 129

XXIII.

THE PRINCE ATTENDS SERVICE AT THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH 138

XXIV.

THE PRINCE INSPECTS THE MANCHESTER REGIMENT . 145

XXV.

PAGE

An unsatisfactory Explanation 149

XXVI.

The Ride to Rawcliffe Hall 157

XXVII.

Rawcliffe Hall 161

XXVIII.

A startling Disclosure 169

XXIX.

The mysterious Chamber 175

XXX.

A terrible Catastrophe 182

XXXI.

Sir Richard Rawcliffe's Confession . . . 193

XXXII.

Atherton's Decision is made 208

BOOK III.

The March to Derby, and the Retreat.

I.

An Old Jacobite Dame 218

II.

Atherton's Gift to Constance 226

III.

PAGE
A Retreat resolved upon 236

IV.

How the Manchester Regiment was welcomed on its Return 247

V.

A Fresh Subsidy demanded 255

VI.

A False Message brought to Helen . . . 260

VII.

A Court-Martial 272

VIII.

Helen Pleads in Vain 282

The Good Old Times.

BOOK II.

(CONTINUED.)

PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD IN MANCHESTER.

IX.

ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST DIVISION OF THE HIGHLAND ARMY. LORD GEORGE MURRAY.

SHORTLY after the departure of the magistrates, the bells of all the churches in the town began to ring joyously, and were soon answered by loud and merry peals from the only church on the other side of the Irwell.

Summoned by this exhilarating clamour, multitudes flocked into the streets, decked in holiday attire, and most of them crossed the bridge into Salford in expectation of witnessing the entrance of the Highland army.

The weather was most propitious. Never was finer day seen in November, and the bright sunshine diffused general gaiety and good-humour among the concourse.

Good-looking damsels predominated in the crowd—Manchester has always been noted for female beauty—and they were all exceedingly curious to behold the handsome young prince and the Scottish chiefs.

There was a great deal of talk about the Insurrection of '15, but this was chiefly among the older people, for as the first rising took place before the young folks were born, they could not be expected to feel much interest in it.

It may seem strange that the approach of the much-dreaded Highlanders should not have caused alarm, but by this time the inhabitants generally had got over their fears, and were disposed to welcome the insurgents as friends, and not treat them as enemies.

Among the fair sex, as we have said, the youth, courage, romantic character, and good looks of the prince excited the greatest interest and sympathy. Whatever the men might be, the women were all Jacobites.

Meanwhile, the bells continued to peal joyfully, and multitudes crossed into Salford, and stationed themselves on either side of the main street, through which it was expected the prince and the army would pass.

Everything looked bright and gay, and everybody—except a few moody Presbyterians—appeared happy.

On the summit of the lofty tower of the collegiate church floated a large standard fashioned of white, red, and blue silk. This broad banner, which attracted great attention from the concourse, had been placed in its present conspicuous position by the management of Tom Syddall.

The patience of the large crowd assembled

in Salford was somewhat sorely tried. Those who had secured good places for the spectacle did not like to leave them, and they had nothing to do but talk and jest with each other; but at length the shrill notes of the bagpipes proclaimed that the Highlanders were at hand, and the trampling of horse was heard.

First to appear was a troop of horse commanded by Lord Strathallan. This was quickly followed by a regiment of Highlanders, with their pipers marching in front.

The sight of these fine, stalwart men, in their picturesque garb, each armed with firelock, claymore, and dirk, and bearing a target on his shoulder, caused the greatest excitement among the beholders, who cheered them lustily as they marched on.

The regiment was commanded by Lord George Murray, one of the most distinguished and important persons in the prince's service, who had been created a

lieutenant-general of the Highland army. He was a younger brother of the Marquis of Tullibardine. Lord George was not young, as will be understood, when it is mentioned that he was concerned in the outbreak of 1715; but he was still in the prime of life, undoubtedly the boldest and ablest leader in the rebel forces, and the one best able to direct the movements of the present campaign; but though he was a prominent member of the council, his advice was rarely taken, owing to the bluntness of his manner, which was highly displeasing to the prince, as well as to several of his royal highness's advisers.

In this respect Lord George offered a marked contrast to his rival the courtly Duke of Perth, of whom we shall have occasion to speak anon.

Lord George Murray was tall, powerfully built, and possessed great personal strength. A thorough soldier, of undaunted

courage, and capable of undergoing any amount of fatigue, he was unpopular from his rough and somewhat contemptuous manner. His character could be easily read in his haughty demeanour and strongly marked countenance. Lord George was attended by his aide-de-camp, the Chevalier de Johnstone. As he rode along and eyed the crowd on either side, his stern glance struck terror into many a breast.

X.

THE DUKE OF PERTH.

NAIRNE'S Athole men came next, and were followed by other fine Highland regiments, respectively commanded by General Gordon of Glenbucket, Lord Ogilvy of Strathmore, and Roy Stuart. Each regiment had two captains, two lieutenants, and two ensigns.

Next came a troop of light cavalry, under the command of Lord Balmerino; and then followed Lord Kilmarnock's hussars with the baggage and artillery.

The train of artillery consisted of sixteen

field-pieces, two waggons laden with powder, and a great number of sumpter-horses.

This division of the Highland army was commanded by the Duke of Perth, whose presence excited general admiration.

Both the duke and his aide-de-camp, who rode beside him, were remarkably well mounted, and both perfect horsemen.

Among the many Scottish nobles who had determined to share the fortunes of Prince Charles Edward, none could compare in personal appearance and deportment with James Lord Drummond, third titular Duke of Perth. The duke's courtesy, refined manners, and unfailing good temper, rendered him popular with all. Though not so thorough a soldier as Lord George Murray, he was equally brave, and in brilliant qualities far surpassed him.

Between these two distinguished personages a great rivalry existed. No member

of the council possessed so much influence with the prince as the Duke of Perth, and the favour shown his rival often caused great umbrage to Lord George Murray, who did not care to conceal his resentment.

The duke had warm friends in Secretary Murray and Sir Thomas Sheridan, so that his position as first favourite was unassailable, certainly by Lord George.

The duke, who was in the very prime of manhood, being only just turned thirty, was grandson of the Earl of Perth, created duke by James the Second on his retirement to France.

Nothing could be more striking than the effect produced by these clan regiments as they marched through Salford on that morning, the different hues of the plaids worn by each corps giving variety and colour to the picture, while the sinewy frames, fierce countenances, and active movements

of the men inspired a certain feeling akin to fear among the beholders, which the warlike notes of the bagpipe did not tend to diminish.

The front ranks of each regiment were composed of gentlemen, whose arms and equipments were superior to those of the others, causing them to look like officers; but they had no rank. All the men were in good spirits, and seemed as if victory lay before them.

Regiment after regiment marched over the bridge, with the sun shining brightly on their picturesque dresses, and glittering on their firelocks and arms—with their colours and pipes playing—bells pealing, and spectators shouting loudly, producing a most extraordinarily animating effect.

Scarcely less striking was it as the Highlanders marched through the town and drew up in St. Ann's-square.

Completely filled by these clan regiments, the large area presented a picture such as it has never since exhibited.

But a scene of a very different kind was being enacted at the same time. While these armed men were gathering in front of the church, a sad ceremonial took place in the churchyard.

A grave had been opened to receive the remains of a respected inhabitant of the town, and the last rites were then being performed by Mr. Lewthwaite, who proceeded as calmly as circumstances would permit.

But other mourners than those expected gathered round the grave as the coffin was lowered into it—Highland officers, bareheaded, and noticeable for their respectful demeanour.

The Highland regiments did not remain long in St. Ann's-square. Having received

their billets, the men were taken to their lodgings by the quarter-masters. The artillery and baggage-waggons proceeded to Castle Field, where a park was formed, and strongly guarded.

XI.

ARRIVAL OF THE SECOND DIVISION.

MULTITUDES of people still remained in Salford patiently awaiting the arrival of the prince with the second division of the Highland army.

All the inmates of Mrs. Butler's dwelling, which, it will be remembered, was situated at the upper end of the main street, had witnessed the march past of the first division. Even the invalid lady herself, who had not quitted the house for a lengthened period, and could not do so now without

considerable risk, came forth to see the young prince.

Not being able to walk so far, she was carried out into the garden, and placed near the gate, which was thrown open. From this position she commanded the road, and could see all that was to be seen.

Near her stood Monica and Constance, both of whom were attired in white dresses, with blue scarves, while in close attendance upon her were her brother, Sir Richard Rawcliffe, Father Jerome, and Jemmy Dawson.

Notwithstanding the excitement of the occasion, Constance looked pensive and absent—her thoughts being occupied with Atherton Legh. Very little conversation had taken place between her and her father, since Sir Richard's return from Preston, and then only in the presence of Father Jerome. All allusion to the young man had been studiously avoided.

By this time Monica had quite shaken off her fears, and when the stirring spectacle commenced, and the clan regiments marched past the gate, her breast glowed with enthusiasm, and all her former ardour returned. She thought no more of her lover's danger, but of the glory he would win; and if he had held back, she would now have urged him on.

But Jemmy required no spurring; he was eager to be an actor in such a scene, and was anxiously expecting his promised commission.

As to Mrs. Butler, she looked on with mingled feelings. What memories were awakened by the sight of those Highland regiments! The men looked the same, wore the same garb, and bore the same arms as those she had seen in former days. Yet the chiefs who had fought in the civil war of 1715, and their faithful clansmen, were all swept away. Were those who had now

taken their places destined to victory or defeat? She trembled as she asked herself the question.

Many a glance was thrown at the fair damsels in the garden as the young officers marched past, and frequent salutes were offered to Sir Richard by those in command of the regiment, but no one halted except the Duke of Perth, who paused to say a few words to him, and was presented to the ladies—delighting them with his courteous manner.

Before the duke rode off, he told them that more than an hour would elapse before the second division came up, and so it turned out.

During this interval, Mrs. Butler remained in the garden, and of course the others did not leave her. Some slight refreshments, with wine, were brought her by a man-servant from the house, and of these she partook in order to support her

strength, which she feared might fail her. She listened anxiously for any sounds that might announce the prince's approach, but it was long before he came.

At length the loud notes of the bag-pipes were heard in the distance, and soon afterwards a regiment of cavalry came up, commanded by Lord Elcho, who carried his sword in his hand, as did the men. These were the life-guards. Blue coats with red facings formed the uniform of the troop. And the men wore gold-laced hats with white cockades in them. Indeed, we may remark that all the officers and soldiers of the Highland army wore white cockades in hat or bonnet.

The life-guards were soon gone, and then a personage appeared, upon whom all eyes were fixed.

XII.

THE YOUNG CHEVALIER.

ATTENDED by a dozen or more nobles and officers of high rank, all dressed in blue coats faced with red, and wearing gold-laced hats, marched with a light elastic step, that showed he was not in the slightest degree fatigued, a tall, well-proportioned, fair-complexioned, handsome young man, of some five-and-twenty, dressed in a Highland garb, armed with a broadsword, and carrying a target on his shoulder. He wore no star upon his breast—no ornament of any kind—merely a white rose in

his bonnet, and a blue silk scarf, yet his dignified and graceful deportment proclaimed at once that it was Prince Charles Edward.

The prince's frame was slight, but full of vigour. His features were regular and delicately moulded, his complexion fair, and his eyes bright and blue. His natural blonde locks would no doubt have become him better than the flaxen-coloured peruke which he wore, though that suited him. His expression was extremely amiable and engaging, and his youth, grace, and good looks produced a most favourable impression upon the beholders.

Charles Edward was preceded by a hundred Highland pipers, and as all were playing vigorously, the din caused by them was astounding.

This handsome young prince, who, at the period of his introduction to the reader, was full of romantic ardour and courage, and confident of recovering the throne of

his ancestors, was the eldest son of James Stuart, known as the Chevalier de Saint George, and the Princess Maria Sobieski. Perfect in all manly exercises, Prince Charles Edward possessed powers of endurance that admirably fitted him for the enterprise he had undertaken. His early years had been passed in obscurity in Rome, but he had always cherished the thought of invading England, and at last the opportunity presented itself.

Great efforts had been made by the Jacobite party in Paris to induce the French monarch to aid in the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, but without effect. However, when the celebrated Cardinal de Tencin became first minister of state, he judged that a civil war in England would be highly beneficial to France, and therefore invited Charles Edward to repair to Paris.

Preparations, meanwhile, had been made

to land an army of fifteen thousand men in England under Field-Marshal Saxe, and it was arranged that the prince should accompany the expedition as commander-in-chief.

The fleet set sail, but being dispersed by a violent tempest, suffered so much loss, that the project was abandoned.

But the hopes of the young prince were encouraged by the cardinal minister, who said to him, "The king is averse to another expedition after the disastrous result of the first. But why should you not go alone, or with a few attendants, and land on the North of Scotland? Your presence alone would revive your party, and create an army."

This advice was too much in accordance with the aspirations of the brave and adventurous young prince not to be eagerly adopted.

Provided with money and arms by the cardinal, he set sail from Dunquerque in

July, 1745, in the *Dentelle* sloop of war, and after some hazardous escapes, landed on the north-west coast of Scotland, where he was met by Mr. Murray, who became his secretary and treasurer. His standard having been reared, he was speedily joined by the MacDonalds, the Camerons, and other Highland chiefs, the Duke of Perth, the Marquis of Tullibardine, Lord Elcho, and Lord George Murray.

Having mustered an army of four thousand men, he marched on Perth, and arrived there on the 3rd of September.

After a short stay at Perth, he proceeded at the head of his army to Edinburgh, and the Scottish capital opened its gates to the grandson of James the Second. Here he took possession of the palace of his ancestors; caused his father to be proclaimed at the Cross by the title of King James the Eighth of Scotland, and himself as Regent; and after the ceremonial gave a splendid

ball at Holyrood. At Edinburgh he was joined by Lord Nairne with a thousand men.

On the 21st of September occurred the battle of Preston Pans, in which Sir John Cope was completely routed. The news of the young Chevalier's unlooked-for and decisive victory animated the Jacobites in every quarter, greatly alarmed the English Government, and brought back George the Second from Hanover.

Having received considerable reinforcements, the prince gave a troop of horse to Lord Balmerino, and another to Lord Kilmarnock. Money and arms also arrived most opportunely from France, and in one of the vessels that brought these supplies came the Marquis d'Eguilles. The court continued to be held at Holyrood, and the receptions were now most brilliantly attended, especially by the fair sex.

Meanwhile, Marshal Wade having as-

sembled an army at Newcastle, the prince determined to cross the Border and give him battle.

Several of his council, among whom was Lord George Murray, sought to dissuade him from his design, urging him to await the arrival of the expected reinforcements from France; but no representations either of difficulty or danger could induce the chivalrous prince to give up his scheme, or even defer it.

He told his councillors that he saw they were determined to stay in Scotland, and defend their own country; but he added, in a tone that showed his resolution was taken, "I am not less determined to try my fate in England, even though I should go alone."

On the last day of October he marched out of Edinburgh at the head of an army of five thousand five hundred men. His first object was to attack Carlisle, and as Marshal

Wade had not advanced from Newcastle, he did not anticipate an engagement with him.

Carlisle surrendered to the Duke of Perth, and on the 17th November, Charles Edward made a triumphal entry into the city. At a council held there, the prince, flushed by success, proposed to continue his march to the metropolis, expressing a firm conviction that he should be joined by a large party in Lancashire and Cheshire, while the Marquis d'Eguilles felt equally confident that reinforcements would arrive from France.

Some opposition to the plan was offered by Lord George Murray, who affirmed that the Duke of Cumberland had assembled an army nearly doubling in number that of his royal highness, which must be encountered, and that Marshal Wade had made a demonstration for the relief of Carlisle, but the advice was overruled.

Resuming his march, the prince passed

through Lancaster, and arrived with his whole army at Preston on the 26th. From Preston the Highland army marched to Manchester, in two divisions, as related.

Rash as the young Chevalier's enterprise may appear, it is more than probable that it would have been accomplished if he had received the support he expected.

Before quitting Scotland he had received invitations and promises of aid from many important Jacobite families in the northern counties; and he had been led to believe that a general rising in his favour would be made in Lancashire, Cheshire, and North Wales.

But he soon found these promises fallacious. Very few persons of importance joined his standard, and no risings took place. He had expected powerful reinforcements from France, but none arrived. Yet he had advanced boldly and successfully, and though unaided, it appeared not un-

likely that he would achieve the daring project he had conceived.

Hopes were still entertained by some of his counsellors that a large number of volunteers would join at Manchester, and the warm reception given him by the inhabitants as he approached the town, seemed to warrant these expectations.

As the prince marched a few paces in front of his attendants, he was at once distinguishable; but even if he had been mixed up with them, his dignified deportment would have rendered him conspicuous.

Amongst the nobles and Highland chiefs who attended him were the Marquis of Tullibardine, Glengarry, Ardshiel, Colonel Ker of Gradon, and Colonel O'Sullivan.

Behind them came a body-guard of Highlanders.

The second division of the army consisted of regiments belonging to the chiefs previously mentioned, but these regiments

were now left to the command of the officers, their leaders preferring to march on foot with the prince. A troop of hussars under the command of Lord Balmerino brought up the rear.

XIII.

THE PRINCE'S INTERVIEW WITH MRS. BUTLER AND THE TWO DAMSELS.

As the young Chevalier approached Mrs. Butler's residence, he chanced to cast his eye into the garden—the gate of which, as we have said, was standing wide open—and the charming group formed by the two beautiful girls and the invalid lady attracted his attention.

Standing close beside them, he perceived Sir Richard Rawcliffe, whom he had seen at Preston the day before.

On beholding the young Chevalier, Mrs.

Butler rose from her chair, and stepping forward, made him a profound obeisance.

Something in the earnest look fixed upon him by the invalid lady interested the prince, and he could not resist the impulse that prompted him to speak to her.

Accordingly he signified his intention to the Marquis of Tullibardine; a halt was immediately called, the pipers ceased playing, while the prince stepped out of the line, followed by that nobleman, and entered the garden.

Nothing could exceed the surprise and delight caused by this gracious act, not only to the object of it, but to the two fair damsels who stood beside her. It may be thought that these lovely girls would have attracted the prince to the garden rather than an elderly dame, but he seemed scarcely aware of their presence till he was close beside them.

Instantly divining the prince's intention,

Sir Richard Rawcliffe presented his sister. Charles could not prevent her from kneeling, but he immediately raised her, and remarking that she looked very faint, conducted her, with much solicitude, to a seat.

He then turned to the two fair damsels, who were likewise presented to him by Sir Richard, and received them with much grace and dignity.

Not till this moment did he become aware of Constance's surpassing beauty, and he then remarked to her father:

"I was told that you had a lovely daughter, Sir Richard, but I did not imagine she was so beautiful as I find her."

"Such praise coming from your royal highness will make her vain," said the baronet.

"Nay, I meant not to call blushes to her cheek, though they do not spoil it," said Charles. "But Miss Rawcliffe has another great merit in my eyes besides her personal

attractions. If I am not misinformed, she is devoted to the royal cause."

"Heart and soul!" cried Constance, enthusiastically. "Your royal highness has not a more zealous adherent than myself."

"I cannot doubt it. But I hope you have proved your zeal by bringing me a hundred swords."

"I have brought you one," she replied—"but it is worth a hundred."

"Ah! to whom does it belong?" inquired the prince, smiling.

"To a brave young man, whose name must be utterly unknown to your royal highness—Mr. Atherton Legh."

"There you are mistaken. His name has been mentioned to me by Colonel Townley, who described him—I have no doubt quite correctly—as the finest young man in Manchester. Mr. Atherton Legh shall have a commission on your recommendation, Miss

Rawcliffe. You will present him to me, Sir Richard."

"It will be better, perhaps, that Colonel Townley should present him to your royal highness," said Sir Richard.

The reluctance displayed by the baronet did not escape the prince, whose perceptions were very acute, but a glance at Constance served partly to explain matters to him, and he remarked with apparent indifference:

"Be it so;" adding significantly, "I shall not forget that I am indebted to you, Miss Rawcliffe, for this brave young recruit."

It was now Jemmy Dawson's turn to be presented, and he had no cause to complain of his reception. The few words said to him by the prince were calculated to rouse his zeal, while they highly gratified Monica.

"I can claim as much credit as my

cousin Constance," she said. "Each of us has brought a recruit; and we both feel equally sure your royal highness will be well served."

By this time, Mrs. Butler had recovered from her faintness, and perceiving that her gaze was anxiously fixed upon him, the prince went to speak to her.

"You have something to say to me, madam, methinks?" he observed.

"I only desire to tell you, prince, that I have prayed daily for the restoration of your royal house. You will therefore understand what my feelings must be when I behold you at the head of an army determined to wrest the crown of this kingdom from the usurper who now wears it. May Heaven strengthen your arm, and fight for you, so that you may regain your own, and the rights and liberties of your faithful subjects may be preserved, and the old religion be restored!"

"I have come to win a kingdom for my royal father, or to perish in the attempt," said Charles Edward, energetically.

"Victory awaits you, prince," she cried. "I feel assured of it. The tidings of your triumph will efface my sad recollections of the former ill-starred attempt, and I shall die content."

"My sister lost one who was very dear to her, in the fatal affair of '15," remarked Sir Richard.

"I cannot wonder then that she should have sad memories connected with that unfortunate struggle," said the prince in a tone of profound sympathy. "Farewell, madam. I hope you will have no more to mourn—but many to greet as victors."

He then addressed the two fair damsels, expressing a hope that he might see them again during his brief stay in Manchester; after which, with a graceful inclination of his person towards the party, he stepped

back, and resumed his place in the line of march.

Before, however, the troops could be put in motion, another slight interruption occurred. It was caused by the Rev. Mr. Clayton, the chaplain of the collegiate church.

Mr. Clayton, as will be conjectured from what we are about to narrate, was a Jacobite and a Nonjuror.

Taking advantage of the halt, he threw himself at the prince's feet, and in most fervent tones implored the Divine blessing on his head—praying that the enterprise on which he was engaged might prove successful.

As the chaplain was in full canonicals the incident caused a great sensation, and was particularly gratifying to the prince.

When the benediction was concluded, and Mr. Clayton had retired, the word was

given, the pipers began to play as loudly as before, and the march was resumed.

Shortly afterwards, Prince Charles Edward crossed the bridge, and, amid loud acclamations, entered Manchester.

XIV.

THE PRINCE'S MARCH TO HEAD-QUARTERS.

No sooner did the vast assemblage collected near the approaches to the bridge distinguish the tall graceful figure of the young Chevalier amid the throng of Scottish nobles and chiefs, than all heads were instantly uncovered, and a loud cry arose of "Long live King James the Third, and Prince Charles Edward!"

At the same time a band of musicians, stationed at Tom Syddall's door, and directed by the Jacobite barber in person, struck up the old air of "The king shall

have his own again." But this could scarcely be heard amid the din caused by the pipers.

Most of the open windows on either side of the street were adorned by damsels dressed in white, and these fair adherents to the royal House of Stuart now leaned forward and waved their handkerchiefs to the prince.

Such a demonstration could not be otherwise than highly gratifying to the young Chevalier, and he bowed and smiled in acknowledgment of the salutations offered him, the grace of his manner eliciting fresh cheers.

So greatly was the crowd excited, that it was with difficulty the foremost ranks could be prevented from pressing on the prince, who, however, would not allow his body-guard of Highlanders to interfere.

No untoward circumstance marred the general satisfaction. Bells were pealing

blithely, drums beating, pipes playing, colours flying, men shouting, kerchiefs waving all the way from the bridge to the market-place, where a brief halt was made.

Having been joined by his secretary, Mr. Murray, who explained where his head-quarters were situated, the prince resumed his march, still preceded by the pipers, and attended by his body-guard of Highlanders. On reaching the house designed for him, he entered it with his suite, and disappeared from the view of the shouting crowd who had followed him. The pipers and the Highland guard drew up in the court-yard.

A sumptuous repast had been prepared in the dining-room, and to this Charles and his attendants at once sat down.

Little repose, however, was allowed the indefatigable prince. The chief magistrates, Mr. Fowden and Mr. Walley, were waiting

to confer with him in the audience-chamber, across which, in accordance with Mr. Murray's suggestion, a green silk curtain had been drawn — the stuff, however, being slight in texture, the persons on either side the hanging could be easily distinguished.

The magistrates, therefore, seeing the prince enter the room, attended by Mr. Murray and Sir Thomas Sheridan, bowed profoundly, and their obeisances were graciously returned.

Charles Edward then seated himself, and the conference was opened by his secretary.

"His royal highness thanks you, gèntlemen," said Mr. Murray, "for the excellent arrangements made for him, and desires to express his gratification at the enthusiastic reception given him on his entrance into your loyal town. He will now have to put the zeal and devotion of your fellow-townsmen to the test."

"In what way, sir?" demanded Mr. Walley, uneasily. "We have given orders that the whole of the prince's forces shall be billeted, and have directed the excise-money to be sent to you as treasurer. What further proof can we give of our desire to serve his royal highness?"

"I will explain, gentlemen, in a word," replied the secretary. "The prince requires a subsidy from the town of five thousand pounds. War cannot be carried on without money, and our coffers are well-nigh emptied."

"I fear it will be impossible to raise that amount," said Mr. Fowden.

"We should grieve to have to levy the money by force, but we must have it. Consult together, gentlemen, and give us your answer."

After a moment's deliberation with his brother magistrate, Mr. Fowden asked if half the amount would not suffice; where-

upon Charles remarked, in a loud peremptory tone, "Bid them furnish three thousand pounds—not less."

"You hear, gentlemen. Three thousand pounds must be furnished to the treasury without delay. You know the penalty of neglect."

"We will do our best," said Mr. Fowden. "But pray give us till to-morrow."

"Be it so," replied the secretary.

The magistrates then asked if the prince had any further commands.

"His Majesty King James the Third will be proclaimed at the Cross," said Mr. Murray; "and it is necessary that both of you should be present at the ceremony. It is also necessary that one of you should repeat the proclamation."

The magistrates tried to excuse themselves, but the secretary cut them short, saying, "You have nothing to fear, gentlemen. We will make it appear you are

acting on compulsion. But take care that the prince's manifesto and declaration, copies of which will be delivered to you, are distributed to the crowd. And now, gentlemen, we will not detain you longer. His royal highness expects to see you to-morrow—with the money."

The audience then terminated, and the magistrates, who were full of perplexity, quitted the chamber. The prince and his companions laughed very heartily when they were gone.

Several other persons were admitted to a private interview, after which the prince adjourned to a much larger room which had been prepared for his receptions.

XV.

THE PRINCE'S LEVÉE.

THE room had a very brilliant appearance, being crowded with officers of high rank. In the antechamber all who desired the honour of a presentation were assembled.

On the entrance of the prince, who proceeded towards the upper end of the room, and took up a station there, all the nobles and heads of clans formed a semicircle around him—those nearest his royal highness, on the right and left, being the Duke

of Perth, the Marquis of Tullibardine, the Marquis d'Eguilles, Lords George Murray, Pitsligo, Nairne, Kilmarnock, and Balmerino.

The first persons to approach the prince were Colonel Townley and the Chevalier de Johnstone, the latter of whom, as already stated, being aide-de-camp to Lord George Gordon.

Colonel Townley, who was in full uniform, wore a plaid waistcoat, and a plaid sash lined with white silk. He came to inform the prince that the Manchester Regiment was now embodied, and would be paraded on the morrow.

"The deficiency in men, of which I complained to your royal highness has been made good by Colonel Johnstone, who has delivered over to me all the recruits raised for him in this town by Sergeant Dickson."

"You have done well, colonel," remarked

the prince, approvingly, to Johnstone. "How many men has Sergeant Dickson enlisted?"

"Nearly two hundred," was the reply. "They are all fine fellows, and will make excellent soldiers."

"I esteem myself singularly fortunate in obtaining them," observed Colonel Townley. "I was almost in despair, not being able to find fifty volunteers myself."

"Sergeant Dickson deserves promotion," said the prince. "I am told that he entered the town, attended only by Helen Carnegie and a drummer."

"It is perfectly true," replied Johnstone. "I would not detract from the brave fellow's merit; but without Helen he would have done nothing."

"Between them they have raised the Manchester Regiment," remarked Colonel Townley, and saved me a vast deal of trouble."

"Have all the officers joined?" asked the prince.

"All," replied Townley. "Two of them are in the antechamber. Captains James Dawson and Atherton Legh. May I have the honour of presenting them to your royal highness?"

Charles Edward having graciously signified his assent, Colonel Townley bowed and retired, reappearing in another moment with the two young officers in question.

They now wore the uniform of the regiment—red faced with white—and looked so well that Colonel Townley felt very proud of them as he led them towards the prince, by whom they were received with the utmost condescension.

Atherton Legh's appearance seemed particularly to please him, and at the close of the brief interview, he desired him to

remain in the house, as he had some orders to give him.

Much gratified by the command, Atherton bowed and retired with his friend.

Several other presentations then took place, which need not be recorded, the two persons chiefly distinguished by the prince's notice being Dr. Deacon and Dr. Byrom.

To the latter he said many flattering things well calculated to gratify him; towards the other he adopted a more serious tone, and thanked him earnestly for the zealous attachment he had always shown to the royal cause.

"You have proved your devotion in many ways, doctor," he said, "but never more than in causing your three sons to enrol themselves in the Manchester Regiment. I thank you in the king my father's name, and in my own."

"Heaven grant that my sons may serve

your royal father well, most gracious prince!" said Dr. Deacon. "I can only aid you with my prayers."

Overcome by his emotion, he then bowed deeply and retired.

At this juncture the doors of the ante-chamber were thrown open, and a bevy of ladies, all attired in white, and wearing plaid sashes, came forth, imparting a much more lively character to the scene.

Most of these fair Jacobites were young, and many of them being exceedingly pretty, it is not wonderful that their appearance should produce an effect upon the excitable Highlanders, who did not care to conceal their admiration of the Southron beauties. Their assiduities, however, did not seem disagreeable to the Manchester damsels.

Meantime the ladies were conducted in succession to the prince, and each had the honour of kissing his hand. Some of

them received a pretty compliment into the bargain. So well turned were these compliments, and so captivating the smiles that accompanied them, that the younger damsels were quite bewitched, and declared that so charming a prince had never been seen.

By far the prettiest of those presented was Beppy Byrom, who was quite as much influenced as any of the others by the witchery of the prince's manner.

As she drew near, she scarcely dared to raise her eyes towards him, but a few pleasant words soon set her at her ease, and the smile that lighted up her fair features so improved their expression that Charles was as much charmed with her as she was with him.

After their presentation the ladies were taken to an adjoining parlour. It fell to Atherton's lot to conduct Beppy to this room, which was crowded with fair damsels

and Highland officers, laughing, chattering, and quaffing champagne. Large glasses of the same wine were offered them on their entrance, and having drunk the appointed toast with enthusiasm, they seated themselves on a sofa.

Whether the excitement of the occasion gave unwonted lustre to Beppy's eyes, we know not, but it is certain that Atherton felt their force more than he had ever done before.

"I wonder whether you will return to Manchester when the campaign is over, Captain Legh?" she inquired, looking rather languishingly at him as she spoke.

"Does Miss Byrom care to see me again?" he asked. "If so, I shall make a point of coming back, supposing I am able to do so."

"You pay me a great compliment," she remarked. "But surely, I am not the only

person you desire to see again? You must have many dear friends?"

"I have none," he replied, rather gloomily. "You know I am quite alone in the world. If I fall in this expedition, not a tear will be shed for me."

"There you are mistaken," she rejoined, in a sympathetic tone. "But you speak rather bitterly. I fear you have been badly treated."

"No, I have no right to complain. I am only paying the penalty of my folly. I have been deluded by false hopes; but I shall try to act more sensibly in future."

"An excellent resolution, and I trust you will keep to it. Never fall in love again — if you can help it. That's my advice."

"But you don't expect me to follow it?"

"I have no influence over you, and cannot therefore expect you to be guided by

my counsels. But I repeat—don't fall in love again."

"The warning comes too late," he said. "I must make a desperate effort, or I shall be caught in fresh toils."

"Well, the effort can be easily made, since you are going away."

"But I shall carry the remembrance with me. I shall not forget our present conversation, and if I return I will remind you of it."

"I have very little faith in the promise. By that time you will probably have changed your mind."

"You must entertain a very poor opinion of me, Miss Byrom, if you really think so."

"I don't imagine you differ from the rest of your sex. Men are proverbially inconstant. 'Out of sight, out of mind,' you know."

"On my return you will find me unchanged," he said.

So engrossed was Atherton by the young lady near him, that he had not noticed the entrance of Constance, with Jemmy Dawson and Monica. But chancing to look up at the moment, he perceived her standing at a little distance, with her large eyes fixed upon him. The expression of her countenance showed that she had overheard what had passed between him and Miss Byrom. With a disdainful glance, she moved away with her father.

Atherton was quite confounded, and for a moment could not speak, but at length he stammered:

"Do you see who is in the room?"

"Miss Rawcliffe you mean," replied Beppy. "Yes, I saw her come in. I did not tell you, because I fancied you had no longer any interest in her. But I begin to think you have not so completely shaken off your fetters as you imagined. If all is at an end, why should her presence trouble you?"

"I am not quite master of my feelings," he rejoined.

"So I perceive," said Beppy. She then added, in a good-natured tone: "Well, we have stayed here long enough. Let us go."

Much relieved by the proposal, the young man instantly arose, and offering her his arm, prepared to quit the room.

But, in making their way through the crowd, they were soon brought to a stand-still, and found themselves face to face with Constance.

By this time Atherton had recovered his self-possession, and bowed coldly, and his salutation was as distantly returned. Beppy, however, who had some little malice in her composition, rather enjoyed the situation, and not feeling inclined to put an end to it, immediately engaged Miss Rawcliffe in conversation, and left Atherton to Monica and Jemmy Dawson.

Fain would he have escaped, but he could

not leave Beppy, who, indeed, did not relinquish her hold of his arm. Luckily, champagne was brought by the attendants, and everybody took a glass, as in duty bound.

Again the prince's health was drunk, and with as much enthusiasm as before, though Beppy only placed the glass to her lips.

"You have not done justice to the toast, Miss Byrom," cried a voice near her.

And turning, she perceived Colonel Townley, who had just entered the room with her father.

"I have already drunk it," she replied. "But I have wine enough left to drink 'Success to the Manchester Regiment,' and I do so."

And she again raised the glass to her lips.

Colonel Townley bowed, and expressed his thanks.

"More champagne," he cried to the attendants. "Gentlemen," he added, to his

officers, "let us drink to Miss Rawcliffe and the ladies who have helped to raise the regiment."

Due honour was done to the toast. As Atherton bowed to Constance, she regarded him coldly, and scarcely acknowledged the attention.

"Something is wrong," thought Colonel Townley. "I must endeavour to set it right. You will be pleased to hear, Miss Rawcliffe," he said, "that his royal highness fully appreciates the service you have rendered him. I took care to tell him that the Manchester Regiment owed Captain Legh to you."

"The circumstance was scarcely worth mentioning," she rejoined, with affected indifference.

"The prince thought otherwise," remarked Colonel Townley. "I will not repeat the flattering things he said——"

"Oh, pray do not!" she interrupted. "I would rather not hear them."

"But they relate chiefly to Captain Legh."

"Then keep them for his private ear," she rejoined.

The colonel shrugged his shoulders and said no more.

Just then the pipers stationed in the court began to play, and as the hall-door stood open, the lively strains resounded through the house, and made the Highland officers eager for a dance.

They began to talk about Scotch reels and other national dances, of which the young ladies had never heard, but they did not venture to propose any such agreeable exercise, as it would have been contrary to etiquette.

The pipers, in fact, had been ordered to play as an intimation to the assemblage

that the prince's levée was over, and as soon as this was understood the company began to depart.

Colonel Townley offered his arm to Constance, and conducted her to the entrance-hall, where they found Sir Richard Rawcliffe, Dr. Byrom, and several other gentlemen who were waiting for their wives and daughters.

As soon as the young ladies had been consigned to their natural protectors, Colonel Townley turned to Atherton, and said:

"You will return at eight o'clock to-night, Captain Legh. You are bidden to the supper by the prince. I was specially commanded to bring you. His royal highness seems to have taken a fancy to you. But tell me!—what is the cause of the misunderstanding between you and Miss Rawcliffe?"

"I know not," replied Atherton. "But

she looks coldly upon me—and her father has treated me with great rudeness."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Colonel Townley. "I will have an explanation from him. Remember that the regiment will be paraded in St. Ann's-square at ten o'clock to-morrow."

They then separated, and Atherton quitted the house.

The court was filled by the Highland body-guard and the pipers. The latter, drawn up in two lines through which the company passed, were making a prodigious din, greatly to the delight of the crowd collected in the street.

XVI.

THE ILLUMINATIONS.

THE town now presented a most extraordinary appearance, and looked as if occupied by a hostile army—the streets being filled with Highland soldiers, who were wandering about, staring at the houses and shops, and besieging the taverns.

The townspeople seemed on very good terms with their visitors, and the occupants of the houses at which the soldiers were billeted received them as well as could be expected.

By this time all the principal personages

connected with the Highland army had taken possession of the quarters assigned them, and sentries were placed at the doorways or at the gates.

Large bonfires were lighted in various parts of the town—in the market-place, in Spring Fields, on Shude Hill, on Hunt's Bank, and at the foot of the bridge, and preparations were made for a general illumination at night.

Nothing was neglected by the magistrates. In obedience to the injunctions they had received from Mr. Murray, they attended at the Town Cross to assist at the proclamation of his Majesty King James the Third. A large concourse assembled to witness the ceremony, and shouted lustily at its conclusion.

As yet, no disturbance whatever had occurred—for the Whigs and Presbyterians consulted their own safety by remaining quiet, well knowing if they made a demon-

stration they would be quickly overpowered. Consequently, the town continued tranquil.

As soon as it became dusk, the illuminations commenced. They were general, for no one dared to disobey the order, and the obnoxious Whigs and Presbyterians burnt more candles than their Jacobite neighbours. But the display did not save their windows. A large mob armed with bludgeons went about the town shouting, "Long live King James the Third, and Charles, Prince Regent!" and when they came to a house the owner of which was offensive to them, a great smashing of glass took place.

No efforts were made to check these lawless proceedings. Every license was allowed the mob, so long as they confined their playful attentions to the opposite party. For the sufferers there was no redress, since the streets swarmed with Highland soldiers, who enjoyed the sport.

Additional excitement was given by the pipers who marched about playing loudly upon their shrill instruments. What with the bonfires, the illuminations, the uproarious crowd, the Highlanders and the pipers, the ordinary aspect of the town seemed entirely changed.

The spectacle was so novel and curious, that many of the gentler sex came forth to witness it, and it must be said to the credit of the crowd that the ladies experienced no sort of annoyance.

Luckily, the night was fine, though sufficiently dark to give full effect to the illuminations.

Beppy and her father, accompanied by Atherton, walked about for nearly two hours, and Miss Byrom declared it was the prettiest sight she ever beheld. She had seen an illumination before, but never on so grand a scale, while the strange accompaniments greatly amused her.

Oddly enough, the illuminations in the old parts of the town were more effective than in the modern streets. With their lattice windows lighted up, the ancient habitations looked exceedingly picturesque.

But by far the most striking object in the town was the collegiate church. Partly buried in gloom—partly revealed by the bonfires kindled in its vicinity, the flames of which were reflected upon its massive tower, battlements, and buttresses—the venerable pile was seen to the greatest advantage. Very few, however, except the persons we have mentioned, cared to gaze at it. Those who crossed the churchyard made the best of their way to the streets, to see the illuminations and mingle with the crowd.

After bidding good-night to his friends, Atherton repaired to the only house in Manchester which was not illuminated.

But though the prince's residence was

not lighted up, abundant evidence was furnished that a grand entertainment was about to take place inside it. The Highland guard was drawn up in two lines, extending from the gate to the doorway, and through this avenue all the nobles, chiefs of clans, and officers who were invited to sup with the prince, made their way into the house.

Some of them arrived in sedan-chairs, but the majority came on foot, since no coaches could be procured. But however they came, their appearance was greeted with cheers by the concourse collected in front of the mansion, and many an eye followed them as the door was flung open to give them admittance.

Naturally, Atherton felt elated on finding himself among so important an assemblage; but a great distinction was reserved for him.

It chanced that the prince was in the hall

as he entered, and on seeing him, his royal highness addressed him with the most gracious familiarity, and taking him apart, said:

"Captain Legh, I am going round the town after supper, and I mean to take you with me."

Atherton bowed.

"I am told the illuminations are very good, and I want to see them. But I do not desire to be recognised, and I shall therefore take no other attendant except yourself."

Again Atherton bowed deeply—his looks expressing his gratification.

"Do not mention my purpose," continued the prince, "as I would not have it known. Some of my immediate attendants would insist on accompanying me, and I would rather be without them. In a word, I wish to be incognito, like the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid."

"Your royal highness may rely on my discretion," said Atherton.

"After supper," pursued the prince, "when the company has begun to disperse, come to this hall, and wait till I appear."

Atherton bowed profoundly, and the prince passed on.

XVII.

A QUARREL AT SUPPER.

SHORTLY afterwards, supper was served in the dining-room. The repast was profuse, but no great ceremony was observed, for the prince supped in private with the Duke of Perth, the Marquis of Tullibardine, Lord George Murray, and some other nobles.

Atherton sat next to Colonel Townley, who took the opportunity of giving him some instructions as to the duties he would have to discharge.

"The men will be drilled previous to the muster to-morrow," said the colonel, "and I hope we shall get through it tolerably well. Every allowance will be made for raw recruits. In a few days they will have learnt their duties, and all will be right."

On the opposite side of the table sat Sir Richard Rawcliffe, and Atherton remarked that the baronet's eye was often fixed suspiciously upon him. Colonel Townley also made the same remark.

"Sir Richard is far from pleased to see you here," he observed. "From some cause or other he seems to have taken a strong aversion to you."

"You are acquainted with my history, I know, colonel," said Atherton. "I cannot help thinking that Sir Richard, if he chose, could clear up the mystery that hangs over my birth."

This observation, which was not made in a very low tone, reached the quick ears of

the baronet, who darted an angry look at the speaker.

"Colonel Townley," he said, "pray tell your neighbour that I am totally ignorant of his parentage."

"That does not satisfy me," cried Atherton, addressing the baronet. "I am determined to have an explanation."

Sir Richard laughed contemptuously, but made no reply.

"This discussion cannot be prolonged," said Colonel Townley, who perceived that the attention of those near them was attracted to what was passing. "But some explanation must be given."

No more was said at the time, but when supper was over, and the company had risen from the table, Colonel Townley followed the baronet, and taking him apart, said to him, in a grave tone:

"You have publicly insulted Captain

Legh, Sir Richard. He demands an apology."

"I have none to make," rejoined the baronet, haughtily.

"In that case, Captain Legh will require satisfaction, and an early meeting must be appointed."

"I decline to meet Captain Legh," said the baronet.

"On what ground?" demanded Colonel Townley.

"I do not consider myself bound to give any reason for my refusal. Enough that I will not meet him."

"Your pardon, Sir Richard. 'Tis not enough for me. Since you decline to apologise to Captain Legh, or to give him satisfaction, you will have to fight me."

"If you think proper to espouse his quarrel, I will not balk you. The Chevalier de Johnstone, I am sure, will act for

me, and your second can make all necessary arrangements with him."

"The affair must not be delayed. Will an early hour to-morrow morning suit you?"

"Perfectly," replied Sir Richard. "As early as you please."

"Swords, of course?" said the colonel.

"Swords, by all means."

Bowing stiffly towards each other, they then separated, and Colonel Townley repaired to the entrance-hall, where he expected to find Atherton.

As he was looking round, he noticed the Chevalier de Johnstone, and going up to him, inquired if he had seen Captain Legh.

"Yes," replied Johnstone; "he was here not a minute or two ago. But he has gone upon a nocturnal ramble with the prince. You look incredulous—but 'tis even so. His royal highness has just gone forth to

see the illuminations, or in quest of some adventure, and has taken Captain Legh with him. As he passed quickly through this hall the prince did not stop to speak to any one, but signed to Captain Legh, who instantly followed him. This is all I have to relate; but it proves that the young man is in high favour. His royal highness was muffled in a plaid shawl, different from the one he usually wears, and otherwise disguised; but I knew him."

"'Tis strange he did not take his aide-de-camp, Colonel Ker, with him, in preference to Captain Legh," remarked Colonel Townley. "But I have something to say to you in reference to an affair in which this highly-favoured young man is concerned. Sir Richard Rawcliffe refuses to offer satisfaction to Legh for the rudeness he offered him at supper. I have taken up the quarrel, for I will not allow an officer

in my regiment to be insulted. You won't refuse, I presume, to act as Rawcliffe's second?"

"Certainly not," replied Johnstone. "But I wish the duel could be prevented. It seems a very trifling matter to fight about."

"I think Sir Richard has behaved very badly to the young man, and I will have an apology from him."

"Well, since it must be so, there is no help. Send your second to me."

"Colonel Ker will be my second. I will send him to you as soon as he makes his appearance."

"Meantime, I will consult Sir Richard—though I don't fancy he will apologise."

He then went in quest of the baronet, whom he soon found, while Colonel Townley seated himself in the hall with the intention of awaiting Atherton's return.

XVIII.

CAPTAIN WEIR.

MUFFLED in a plaid shawl, and otherwise disguised, as we have said, the prince passed unrecognised through the guard, and taking his way down Market-street-lane, proceeded to a short distance, and then halted to allow Atherton to overtake him.

In uncovering the lower part of his face to speak to the young man, Charles betrayed himself to an individual who had seen him come forth from the mansion, and suspecting his condition, had followed him cautiously.

This person, whose name was Weir, and who acted as a spy to the Duke of Cumberland, had conceived the daring idea of capturing the prince, and sending him prisoner to the duke, whose head-quarters were at Lichfield. He had been stimulated by the hope of a large reward to undertake this desperate project. A price of thirty thousand pounds had been set upon Charles Edward's head, and though Weir shrank from assassination, he had no scruples as to capturing the prince, neither was he deterred by the extraordinary danger of the attempt. All he wanted was an opportunity to execute his design.

Captain Weir, as he was styled, though he had no real military rank, usually acted alone, but on this occasion he had three subordinate officers with him, on whose courage and fidelity he could perfectly rely. They were now close at hand, watching his

movements, and waiting for orders. Like himself, they were all well armed.

Signing to these personages to follow him, Captain Weir continued to track the prince's course down Market-street-lane.

Meanwhile, the young Chevalier was marching along quietly with Atherton by his side, never for a moment imagining he was in danger, or even that his disguise had been detected.

Scores of Highland soldiers were in the street, but none of them knew their commander-in-chief. Had they done so, they would have formed a guard round his person. But this was precisely what Charles objected to. Wherever there was a crowd he strove to avoid it; but the obstructions were frequent. He was rejoiced, however, to perceive that the white cockade everywhere prevailed, while such observations as reached him indicated that the

populace was decidedly favourable to his cause.

It was such honest expressions of opinion as these that he desired to hear, and where a group of persons were talking loudly, he stopped to listen to their discourse.

As may well be supposed, he cared little for the illuminations except as evidencing the goodwill of the townsfolk, but he was struck by the picturesque appearance of the old houses when thus lighted up. After several halts from one cause or other, he and Atherton at last reached the market-place.

Here, in the centre of the area, was a large bonfire, with a great crowd collected round it. Moreover, a barrel of ale, provided by the magistrates, had just been broached, enabling the crowd to drink the prince's health, coupled with that of his august sire, James the Third, in flowing

Much amused by the scene, Charles stopped to look at it, as well as to examine the curious picture presented by the illuminated market-place.

While he was thus occupied, a sudden movement in the throng separated him from his attendant, and he was endeavouring to free himself from the press when a strong grasp was laid on his arm.

The person, who had thus seized him, was no other than Sergeant Dickson.

"Unmuffle, and show your face, if you be not ashamed of it," cried the sergeant. "I suspect you are a Hanoverian spy. I have heard there are some in the town, and you don't look like an Highland officer."

"Hands off, fellow," said the prince, authoritatively. "Help me out of the crowd."

"Help you to escape! not I!" cried Dickson. "Unmuffle, I say, and let us see your face."

Several of the bystanders now called out, "A spy! a spy!" and Charles would have been unpleasantly circumstanced, if Helen Carnegie, who was near the sergeant, had not interposed.

"You are wrong, Erick," she cried. "This is no spy. Release him."

But the sergeant was not inclined to part with his prisoner, and was only prevented from plucking the covering from his face by Atherton, who by this time had forced his way up.

A word breathed in the ear of the sergeant instantly changed the complexion of affairs, and he was now just as anxious to get the prince off, as he had before been to detain him.

"All right," he shouted. "His royal highness has not a better friend than this noble gentleman. I'll answer for him. Stand back! stand back! my masters, and let the gentleman pass."

Vigorously seconding these injunctions with his strong arm, he cleared a way for the prince, who was soon out of the crowd; and this being accomplished, the sergeant humbly besought pardon for his maladroit proceeding.

"You ought to have known me under any disguise, sergeant," was the prince's good-natured reply. "You are not half so sharp-witted as Helen. She knew me at once."

"I canna take upon mysel to declare that, your highness," replied the Scottish lassie, who had followed in their wake; "but I ken'd fu' weel ye were na a fawse spy, but a leal gentleman."

"Well, sergeant, I am willing to overlook your fault for Helen's sake," said Charles.

"I shall na sae readily forgive mysel," replied the sergeant. "But in truth my thoughts were runnin' on spies. May I be permitted to attend your highness?"

"No, I forbid you to follow me," said Charles.

So saying, he marched off with Atherton, leaving the sergeant greatly chagrined by the interdiction.

"This'll be a gude lesson t' ye, Erick," observed Helen. "In future, ye'll ken the prince when you see him, whether he be muffled in a shawl or na."

"Come wi' me, lassie. I'm resolved to follow his highness at a respectful distance. The night's not ower yet, and something tells me I may be useful to him."

"Ye ought na to disobey orders, Erick, but sin ye win gang yer ain gate, I'll e'en gae wi' ye."

With this they followed in the direction taken by Charles and his companion, but before reaching the bottom of Old Mill Gate, they lost sight of them. The sergeant questioned a person whom he saw standing

at the corner of the street, and was told that two officers had gone towards the bridge. The information was not altogether correct, but the person who gave it was Captain Weir.

Scarcely was the sergeant gone, when a man on a powerful steed came up, and dismounting, delivered the horse to Weir, who was evidently waiting for him.

Accompanied by this man, who marched by his side, Weir rode along Hanging Ditch, and soon overtook his two myrmidons, who were following the prince. They pointed out their intended captive about fifty yards in advance.

"I need not repeat my instructions," said Weir, bending down as he addressed them, and speaking in a low voice. "But I again enjoin you to use the utmost despatch. Success mainly depends upon the celerity with which the work is done. If I

can secure him, I will answer for the rest. Now go on, and draw a little nearer to him."

With this, he dropped slightly behind, got ready a belt, which he meant to use, and examined the holsters to see that the pistols within them were all right.

Had Charles Edward been playing into their hands he could not have taken a course more favourable to the designs of these desperate men. His intention had been to return by the collegiate church; but he was deterred by the uproarious crowds collected round the two large bonfires burning at the back of the venerable fabric, and proceeded up Withy Grove, by the advice of Atherton, who being well acquainted with the locality, explained to him that he could easily and expeditiously regain his head-quarters by crossing an open field on the right at the top of this thoroughfare.

When Weir and his accomplices found that the prince had elected this course they felt sure he was delivered into their hands.

At the rear of the small and scattered tenements, then constituting Withy Grove, were extensive gardens, and beyond these, as already stated, there were two or three fields, as yet entirely unbuilt upon.

Into these fields the prince and his attendant now turned, but the place looked so gloomy from its contrast with the lights blazing in the distance, that Atherton thought it would be prudent to turn back. Charles, however, having no fear, determined to go on.

Shortly afterwards, a real alarm occurred. A horseman, accompanied by three men on foot, suddenly entered the field. At first, neither the prince nor Atherton imagined that their design was hostile, but they were quickly undeceived. Before he could offer any effectual resistance, Charles was seized

by two strong men, who bound his arms behind his back, and twisting the shawl over his mouth, prevented him from uttering an outcry.

At the same time, the horseman dealt a blow at Atherton with a hanger, which the young man avoided, but he had next to defend himself against the attack of the third ruffian on foot, so that he could render no immediate assistance to the prince.

While he was thus engaged, the two desperadoes who had seized Charles lifted him from the ground, and despite his struggles, set him on the horse behind their leader, with his face towards the crupper, while Weir passed a broad leather belt round his waist so as to secure him, and was in the act of buckling it in front, when the bridle was seized by Atherton, who, by a lucky thrust, had delivered himself from his assailant.

Just in time. In another minute rescue would have been impossible. Hitherto,

not a shot had been fired; but Weir now drew a pistol, and levelling it at Atherton, bade him instantly retire on peril of his life.

The gallant young man, however, still held on, but was unable to use his sword, owing to the rearing of the steed.

Weir then fired, but missed his mark, the shot taking effect in his horse's head. With a cry of pain the mortally-wounded animal broke away, but almost instantly sank to the ground and rolled over.

Unbuckling the belt, Weir disengaged himself as quickly as he could from the prostrate steed, and full of rage that his attempt should be thus foiled, the miscreant might have raised his hand against the defenceless prince, if loud shouts had not warned him that assistance was at hand. He then sought safety in flight, and was speeding towards the back of the field, followed by his men, two of whom had been severely wounded by Atherton.

The shout that had alarmed Weir proceeded from Sergeant Dickson and Tom Syddall.

When he was on his way to the bridge, the sergeant encountered the barber, and the latter satisfied him that the prince had not gone in that direction.

His suspicions being excited, Dickson turned back instantly, and Syddall accompanied him—Helen, of course, continuing with her lover.

Some information picked up caused them to turn into Withy Grove, and they had just tracked that thoroughfare, and were debating whether they should go on to Shude Hill, when the noise of a conflict was heard in the field on the right.

"My forebodings have come true," cried the sergeant, "some villains are attacking the prince."

As the words were uttered, the report of a pistol increased their alarm.

Shouting lustily, Erick drew his claymore, and dashed into the field, followed by Helen and Syddall.

Though too late to render assistance, the sergeant was in time to help Atherton to liberate the prince. By their united efforts Charles was soon on his feet, and freed from his bonds.

"I trust in Heaven that your highness has sustained no harm?" cried Atherton, anxiously.

"No, I am entirely uninjured," said Charles, in a cheerful voice. "I have to thank you most heartily, Captain Legh, for freeing me from villains, whose design was evidently to carry me off as a prisoner to the Duke of Cumberland."

"I think I have sufficiently punished two of the villains," said Atherton, "but it enrages me that their leader, and doubtless the contriver of this atrocious scheme, has escaped."

"He may yet be captured," cried the sergeant. "Tom Syddall was with me when I entered the field, and has gone in pursuit. He will give the alarm."

"Then I must hasten to head-quarters, and show myself," said the prince, moving on.

But, after walking quickly for some forty or fifty yards, he was compelled to halt.

"I am more shaken than I thought," he said. "Give me your arm, Helen, I must have some support."

Proceeding in this manner, he had nearly reached the limits of the field, and was approaching an unfinished street that communicated with Market-street-lane, when a sudden light revealed a picket of Highland soldiers. At the head of the party, several of whom carried torches, was Colonel Ker, accompanied by Colonel Townley and the Chevalier de Johnstone.

In another moment, a wild and joyful

shout announced that the Highlanders had discovered their beloved prince. They rushed forward in a body, and the foremost flung themselves at his feet, while those behind gave vent to their delight in another ringing shout.

Colonel Ker did not choose to interrupt this demonstration; but, as soon as it was over, he advanced with the two distinguished officers just mentioned, and all three offered their congratulations to his royal highness on his escape.

After warmly thanking them, Charles called Atherton forward, and told them that he owed his deliverance entirely to the young man's gallant conduct, explaining what had been done, and concluding emphatically with these words, "But, for Captain Legh, I should at this moment be a prisoner."

Naturally, the young man was much gratified by these observations, as well as

by the praises bestowed him by Colonel Ker and the others, but he received their commendations with great modesty.

The prince then asked Colonel Townley how he had heard of the attack made upon him, and learnt that the alarming news had been brought by Tom Syddall.

"Syddall came to me," said Colonel Townley, "and I immediaiely took him to Colonel Ker, as his statement might not have been credited."

"Where is he?" demanded Charles. "I must thank him for what he has done."

"After explaining where your highness would be found, Syddall begged to be allowed to go in quest of the villains who had assailed you," said Colonel Ker, "being fully persuaded that he could accomplish the capture of their daring leader, and as Colonel Townley knew the spot where your royal highness would be found, I did not refuse the request."

"If the villain should be captured to-night," said Charles, "which I think scarce likely, let him be brought before me at once. I will interrogate him myself."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," rejoined Ker. "Shall we now return to head-quarters?"

"By all means," replied Charles. "But march slowly."

Colonel Ker was about to give orders, when another party of soldiers, having a prisoner in their midst, was seen advancing along the unfinished street. The party was guided by Tom Syddall, who carried a torch.

XIX.

CAPTAIN WEIR IS INTERROGATED BY THE PRINCE.

As soon as the prince was descried, the advancing party halted, and Syddall giving the torch to one of the men, pressed forward towards Charles, and making a profound obeisance, said:

"The villain who attacked your royal highness has been captured. He had taken refuge in a stable at the back of the Angel Inn. He is here if you desire to question him."

In obedience to the prince's command the prisoner then stepped forward between

two soldiers. He did not appear intimidated by the position in which he was placed, but bore himself very boldly.

Charles looked at him for a few moments, and calling to Atherton, asked him if he recognised the man.

"I recognise him as the leader of the attack," was the reply.

"Such is my own opinion," observed the prince. "How say you?" he added to the prisoner. "Do you deny the charge?"

"No," replied the prisoner. "I am the man."

"You avow your guilt," said Charles, surprised by his boldness. "How are you named?"

"I am known as Captain Weir," replied the other.

"Have you aught to allege why you should not be delivered to the provost-marshal for immediate execution?" observed Charles, sternly.

"My life is justly forfeited," replied the prisoner, "yet your royal highness will do well to spare me."

"Wherefore?" demanded the prince, whose curiosity was excited.

"My reasons are only for your private ear," replied the prisoner.

After a moment's reflection, during which he kept his eye fixed on Weir, Charles ordered the guard to retire.

"Leave the prisoner with me," he said. "But if he attempts to fly—shoot him."

As soon as the command was obeyed, he said:

"You can speak freely now. Why should I spare your life?"

"Firstly, because it will prove to the world that you are a magnanimous prince, and in that respect superior to your enemies, who are notorious for their severity," replied Weir. "Next, because I can tell much that it behoves your royal highness

to know, as will be evident when I declare that I am employed by the Duke of Cumberland as a spy, and am, therefore, necessarily in his royal highness's confidence. If my life be spared, and I am allowed to go back to Lichfield, where the duke is quartered, I can mislead him by erroneous information, while I shall be able to acquaint you with his plans—exact knowledge of which I need not say will be eminently serviceable."

"There is much in what you say, I must own," replied the prince. "But what guarantee have I that you will not prove a double traitor?"

"My gratitude," replied Weir. "I could never prove faithless to a prince so generous."

"I can make no promise," replied Charles; but in a tone that held out some encouragement to the prisoner.

At a sign from the prince the guard then

advanced, and again took charge of Weir. Shortly afterwards, the prisoner was removed, it being understood that his execution was deferred—much to the disappointment of the Highland guard, who would willingly have shot him.

Charles then addressed a few kindly observations to Syddall, who had been mainly instrumental in the capture of the spy, telling him that the service should not pass unrequited. Nor did the prince neglect to offer his renewed thanks to Sergeant Dickson and Helen for the zeal and devotion they had both displayed. For Atherton a signal manifestation of favour was reserved.

During the march back to head-quarters, which were not far distant, the prince kept the young man near him, and occasionally took his arm. When the party arrived at the mansion in Market-street-lane they found it completely invested by an anxious

crowd, who shouted joyfully on beholding the prince.

But this was nothing to the scene that took place when his royal highness entered the house. Almost all the nobles and Highland chiefs were assembled in the hall, and as Charles entered they pressed around him to offer their warmest congratulations on his escape.

After thanking them in accents that bespoke the deepest emotion, the prince presented Atherton to them, saying. "It is to Captain Legh that I owe my preservation."

The young man was quite overwhelmed by the plaudits that followed this gracious speech.

Thus ended the most important day that had hitherto occurred in Atherton's career. It found him an unknown, and undistinguished; but it left him apparently on the road to honour and preferment.

XX.

THE DUEL.

NEXT morning, at an early hour, Colonel Townley and Colonel Ker issued from the prince's head-quarters, and, rather to the surprise of the guard drawn up in the court-yard, proceeded at a quick pace along the road leading to Stockport.

In a very few minutes they had left the town behind, for beyond Market-street-lane it was then open country. Not many persons were on the road, and these were chiefly country folk bringing poultry, butter, and milk to market.

Some hundred yards in advance, however, were an officer of rank in the Highland army, and a tall middle-aged gentleman wrapped in a cloak. These persons were evidently bent on the same errand as themselves, and marched on quickly for about a quarter of a mile, when they stopped at the gate of a large meadow. The ground appeared suitable to their purpose, inasmuch as it sank at the further end, and formed a hollow which was screened from view.

Sir Richard Rawcliffe and the Chevalier de Johnstone, for they were the individuals who had thus halted, punctiliously saluted the others when they came up, and Johnstone asked Colonel Ker if he thought the ground would suit.

After consulting his principal, Ker replied in the affirmative, upon which they all passed through the gate, and made their way to the hollow.

Before the preliminaries of the duel were entered upon, an ineffectual effort was made by the seconds to adjust the difference. Nothing less than an apology would satisfy Colonel Townley, but this Sir Richard haughtily refused.

Finding their efforts fruitless, the seconds then retired—swords were drawn—hats taken off—and instantly after the salute, the combatants engaged—the attack being made by a thrust in carte delivered by Sir Richard, which was well warded by his adversary.

Several passes were then exchanged, and it was evident to the lookers-on that Colonel Townley meant to disarm his antagonist, and he soon succeeded in the design by skilfully parrying another thrust, seizing the shell of Sir Richard's sword, and compelling him to surrender the weapon.

The seconds then interfered to prevent a renewal of the conflict, but the baronet,

who had received his sword from his adversary, insisted on going on, when the clatter of horses' hoofs was heard rapidly approaching the spot, and the next moment the prince appeared, mounted on a splendid bay charger, and attended by an orderly.

Without waiting a moment, Charles rode down into the hollow, and pushing between the combatants ordered them to sheathe their swords. Of course the command was instantly obeyed.

"A word with you, gentlemen," said the prince, sternly. "You must have been aware that a hostile meeting between persons of your rank would be highly displeasing to me, as well as prejudicial to our cause, and I ought to mark my disapproval of your conduct by something more than a reprimand, but I am willing to overlook it, provided a reconciliation takes place between you."

Both bowed, and Colonel Townley sig-

nified his assent, but the baronet maintained a sullen silence.

"I am aware of the grounds of your quarrel," pursued the prince, "and I hold that you, Sir Richard Rawcliffe, are in the wrong. I trust you will offer a sufficient apology—not merely to Colonel Townley, but to Captain Legh, whom you have insulted."

"Your royal highness's injunctions must needs be obeyed," rejoined the baronet, haughtily. "To Colonel Townley I am quite willing to apologise; but to Captain Legh——"

"I will accept no apology from you, Sir Richard, in which my friend is not included," interrupted Colonel Townley. "I have now a right to demand the cause of the insolent treatment Captain Legh has received, and an explanation of your reason for refusing him the satisfaction to which he was entitled."

"Come with me for a moment, Sir Richard," said Charles, taking him aside. Then bending down towards him, and lowering his voice, he added, "Certain circumstances have just come to my knowledge, showing that you must have some knowledge of Atherton Legh's history, and accounting in some measure for your otherwise incomprehensible conduct towards him."

Sir Richard endeavoured to hide the confusion into which he was thrown, but could not conceal it from the searching glance fixed upon him by the prince.

"Answer me one question?" pursued Charles. "Answer it explicitly? Are you not Atherton Legh's mysterious guardian?"

The baronet's confusion perceptibly increased. Charles seemed to read his thoughts.

"I am wholly at a loss to conceive whence your royal highness has obtained

this information respecting me," he said, at length.

"No matter how it has been obtained," remarked Charles, sternly. "Is it true?"

"It is correct in the main," replied the baronet. "Although I would gladly be excused from giving any further explanation, I shall be willing to do so at some more convenient opportunity."

"The explanation cannot be deferred," said the prince, authoritatively. "After the levée this morning you shall have a private audience."

"I will not fail to attend upon your royal highness," replied Sir Richard, evidently much relieved.

But his brow again clouded, when the prince said:

"You will be pleased to bring your daughter with you."

"My daughter!" exclaimed the baronet.

"She has nothing whatever to do with the explanation I have to offer."

"You have heard my injunction, Sir Richard. Both Miss Rawcliffe and Captain Legh must be present at the audience."

"I make no objection," replied the baronet; "but it pains me to find that I am viewed with suspicion by your royal highness, to whom I have given unquestionable proofs of my zeal and devotion."

"Justice must be done, Sir Richard," rejoined the prince, sternly. "If there has been a wrong it must be righted. The mystery attaching to this young man's birth must be cleared up, and since you are able to give the information required, you are bound to furnish it. I shall expect you and Miss Rawcliffe after the levée."

Then turning to Colonel Townley, he added: "All obstacles to a perfect reconciliation between you and Sir Richard are

now removed. I hope, therefore, to have the pleasure of seeing you shake hands, and trust you will become as good friends as ever."

The injunction having been complied with, the prince prepared to take his departure, saying:

"After a morning duel in France, all those engaged in it—if the principals are fortunately unhurt, or but slightly wounded—make a point of breakfasting together, and I don't see why the custom should not be adopted in this country."

"Nor I," cried Colonel Townley. "I have gained an excellent appetite."

"Then I shall expect you all at breakfast an hour hence," said the prince. "I have much to do to-day. Among other important matters I have to attend the muster of your Manchester Regiment," he added to Colonel Townley.

"I was afraid your royal highness might

be prevented," said the colonel. "And that would have been a great disappointment to us. I trust you do not feel any ill effects from the rough shake you got last night."

"A little stiffness—that is all," replied Charles.

"Have you come to any determination in regard to Weir?" inquired Colonel Ker. "Is he to be shot?"

"No," replied the prince. "I shall send him to the Duke of Cumberland. Now for a ride round the town. I shall be back in time for breakfast. Au revoir!"

With this, he bounded up the side of the hollow and rode off in the direction of the town, followed by the orderly.

XXI.

CASTLE FIELD.

It was a fine November morning, and as the surrounding hills were clearly distinguishable, the prince enjoyed the prospect as he cantered along.

The atmosphere being free from smoke as well as fog, the town had a bright, clean, and cheerful look, which it seldom wears now-a-days. What would Charles have thought if he could have conjured up in imagination the smoky factories and huge warehouses now covering the pleasant

orchards and gardens near which he rode?

Manchester in '45, as we have already stated, resembled a country town, and on no side was the resemblance more complete than on this, since not more than half a dozen scattered habitations could be descried, the upper end of Market-street being then really a lane.

But though the outskirts of the town were quiet enough, it was evident from the tumultuous sounds that reached the ear, not only that the inhabitants generally were astir, but that the numerous companies billeted upon them were likewise moving about.

The call of the bugle resounded from various quarters, and the beating of the drum was heard in almost every street. Charles listened delightedly to sounds that proclaimed the presence of his army. He thought of the advance he had already

made—how another week's march would bring him to London; his breast beat high with hope and ardour; and he fully believed at that moment that his romantic expedition would be crowned with success.

Just then the bells of all the churches began to ring, and their joyful peals heightened his enthusiasm.

Not wishing to enter the town, he commanded the orderly to guide him to Castle Field; upon which the man rode on in front, and describing a wide circuit then entirely unbuilt upon, but now converted into densely-populated districts and large streets, brought him at last to a large open piece of ground, almost encircled by the river Medway, and partly surrounded by the crumbling walls of an old Roman-British castle, in the centre of which the artillery was parked.

Not far from the field-pieces were the powder carriages; while a large portion of

the area was occupied by baggage-waggons; the remainder of the space being filled by artillerymen and their horses.

No better place in the town or neighbourhood could have been found for the purpose. Castle Field would have accommodated double the number of cannon, and thrice the men, it now held.

It was a very pleasant spot, and a favourite resort of the townsfolk. Sports of various kinds took place within the ring, and an annual fair was held there. But it had never looked more picturesque than it did now, filled as it was with cannon, ammunition, baggage-waggons, sumpter-horses, and men.

Early as was the hour, there were numerous spectators on the spot—women as well as men, for the artillery was a great attraction—and some dozens had climbed the old walls, and planted themselves on the top to obtain a better view of the novel scene.

As soon as the crowd collected on Castle Field became aware of the prince's arrival, they gathered around him, cheering and expressing heartfelt satisfaction that he had escaped the treacherous attack made upon him overnight.

There could be no doubt from the enthusiasm displayed that the prince's escape had greatly increased his popularity, all those who got near him declaring they were ready to defend him to the death.

Warmly thanking them for their zeal, Charles extricated himself from the press, and was joined by the Duke of Perth, and some officers of artillery, with whom he rode over the field, examining different matters as he went along.

While making this inspection he encountered many ladies, from all of whom he received congratulations, and to whom he had something agreeable to say.

Amongst others, whose curiosity had in-

duced them to pay an early visit to Castle Field, was Beppy. She had come thither, attended by Helen Carnegie.

Charles stopped to speak to the young lady, and noticing that she was decked in white, and wore a St. Andrew's cross, he said, "You have not forgotten, I perceive, Miss Byrom, that this is the fête-day of our Scottish patron saint."

"I was reminded of it by Helen Carnegie, your highness," replied Beppy. "She came to tell me of your most fortunate escape, for which I cannot be sufficiently grateful, and offered to make me a cross."

"No one has done me a like good turn," laughed Charles.

"Here is a braw St. Andrew's cross, if your royal highness will deign to wear it," cried Helen, offering him one.

Charles smiled his thanks, and fastened the cross to his jacket.

"Are you staying with Miss Byrom, Helen?" he inquired.

"'Deed I am, your royal highness," she replied.

"She will have a lodging at my father's house so long as the army remains in the town," added Beppy.

"I am glad to hear it," replied the prince. "I am certain she will be well cared for."

He then bowed graciously to the young lady, and bestowing a parting smile on Helen, rode on.

But he soon came to another halt.

A little further off he discovered Constance Rawcliffe and Monica. They were attended by Father Jerome. Graciously saluting the two damsels, and bowing to the priest, he said to Miss Rawcliffe:

"You are the very person I desired to see. I have some news for you—but it is for your private ear."

On this intimation Monica and the priest drew back.

Charles then continued in a low voice: "You will be surprised to learn that your father has just fought a duel." Seeing her change colour, he hastened to add: "You need have no sort of uneasiness. He is unhurt. I left the ground only a short time ago, and can therefore speak positively."

"With whom was the duel fought?" inquired Constance, unable to repress her emotion. Not with——"

"Not with Atherton Legh," supplied the prince; "though the quarrel was on his account. Sir Richard's adversary was Colonel Townley. Luckily, your father was disarmed, and so the affair was brought to an end. The duel appears to have been unavoidable, since Sir Richard refused to apologise to Captain Legh for rudeness offered him, and would not even give him

satisfaction. Colonel Townley, therefore, took up the quarrel, and you know the result."

"Is the affair ended?" she asked, eagerly.

"Not quite. A full explanation seems to me to be due from Sir Richard Rawcliffe to Captain Legh; and to insure it, I have laid my commands upon Sir Richard to meet Captain Legh in my presence after the levée, in order that he may answer certain questions which I shall then put to him. I fear this will not be agreeable to your father; but he might have avoided it. A few words would set all right, but these he refuses to utter. I had, therefore, no alternative but to compel him to speak out."

"It is right that Captain Legh should know the truth," remarked Constance.

"I felt sure you would think so, and I therefore enjoined Sir Richard to bring you

with him; but if you see any objections, I will excuse your attendance."

"Perhaps my presence may be necessary," she rejoined. "I will come."

"That is well," said the prince. "I owe Captain Legh a large debt of gratitude, and am anxious to pay it. I shall begin by setting him right. That done, I shall use all my influence to effect a reconciliation between—— You understand my meaning, I am quite sure."

"No more on that subject, I implore your highness," she rejoined, blushing deeply.

"I hope I have said enough to prove how much interested I am in the young man, and how anxious I am to promote his happiness," he said. "Why, here he is!" he exclaimed, as Atherton was seen riding towards the spot. "If I had summoned him, he could not have appeared more

à propos. I hope Miss Rawcliffe will not continue to look coldly upon him."

"I am bound to obey," she rejoined, demurely.

"I wonder what message he brings me?" remarked the prince.

"I dare say your royal highness could give a shrewd guess," she rejoined, with an almost imperceptible smile.

At this moment Atherton came up, and, removing his hat, delivered a letter to the prince.

"From Lord George Murray," he said, still remaining uncovered.

"'Tis not very important," observed Charles, opening it, and glancing at its contents. "But I am glad you have brought it, since it gives me the opportunity of placing you in attendance upon Miss Rawcliffe, who may want an escort when she quits the ground."

"I shall be charmed with the office," re-

joined Atherton; "but I am not sure that Miss Rawcliffe will be equally well pleased."

"Have no misgiving," replied Charles, with a significant look, which implied that all was arranged. "I have some further orders to give you, but it will be time enough when you return to head-quarters. Meanwhile, I charge you to take especial care of these young ladies."

With this, he rode off, and almost immediately afterwards quitted the ground, accompanied by the Duke of Perth.

How much surprised Monica and Father Jerome had been by the earnest discourse that took place between the prince and Constance, we need scarcely state; but they were still more surprised when Atherton came up, and was placed in attendance upon the young lady.

It was quite clear to the lookers-on that the prince had generously taken Atherton's cause in hand, and meant to carry it through

to a successful issue. Monica, who had been much pained at the misunderstanding between the lovers, was rejoiced; but the priest felt differently.

Meantime, Atherton, by no means certain that he was welcome, endeavoured to excuse himself to Constance.

"I trust Miss Rawcliffe will not blame me for this intrusion," he said. "She can dismiss me as soon as she thinks proper."

"That would be impossible, since you have been left with me by the prince," she rejoined. "But I have no desire to dismiss you. On the contrary, I am glad to have an opportunity of congratulating you on your good fortune. You have gained the prince's favour, and are therefore on the high road to distinction."

"If I am restored to your good opinion I shall be satisfied," he rejoined.

"My good opinion is worth little," she said.

"'Tis everything to me," he cried.

She made no direct reply, but after a moment's pause remarked:

"To-day may prove as eventful to you as yesterday. Has not the prince acquainted you with his intentions?"

"He has told me nothing. I am ordered to attend him after the levee—that is all."

"'Tis to meet my father, who, by his highness's command, will disclose certain matters to you. But pray ask me no more questions! I ought not to have told you so much. You will learn all in good time. And now I must relieve you from this irksome attendance."

"You know very well it is not irksome," he replied, with a look of reproach.

"At all events, you must have other duties to attend to. You have to prepare for the muster of your regiment. Jemmy Dawson is fully occupied, or he would be

here with Monica. I really must set you at liberty."

"Pray let me see you safely from the ground?" entreated Atherton.

"Well, I cannot object to that."

Then turning to Monica, she said:

"Are you ready to depart?"

"Quite," replied the other.

Atherton cleared the way, and having brought them to the long unfinished street that led from Castle Field to the centre of the town, he bowed, and rode off, fondly persuading himself he should soon meet Constance again.

XXII.

FATHER JEROME COUNSELS SIR RICHARD.

"You must see your father without delay, Miss Rawcliffe," said the priest in an authoritative tone to Constance, as soon as Atherton was gone. "We are almost certain to find Sir Richard at the Bull's Head, and if he should not be within, he will have left a message for you, or a letter."

Constance quite agreed that it would be proper to call at the Bull's Head, though she felt quite sure her father would make all needful arrangements for the meeting ap-

pointed by the prince, and they accordingly proceeded to the inn.

So crowded was the market-place with troops, that they had considerable difficulty in crossing, and when at length they reached their destination, Sir Richard was absent.

"He had gone out at a very early hour," said Diggles, "and had not yet returned."

"He cannot be long," observed Father Jerome. "We must wait for him."

"I vote that we order breakfast," said Monica. "I am frightfully hungry."

As Constance and the priest both sympathised with her, breakfast was ordered, and it was lucky the precaution was taken, for nearly an hour elapsed before Sir Richard made his appearance.

Long ere this, they had finished their meal, and when the baronet entered the room, were watching the troops from the windows that commanded the market-place,

and listening to the shrill notes of the pipes.

Sir Richard did not seem surprised, and perhaps expected to find them there. Constance sprang forward to meet him, and bidding him good morrow, said eagerly:

"I know all about the arrangements, papa. I have seen the prince at Castle Field."

"I am aware of it," he said, sternly. "I have just left his royal highness."

"Of course you will attend the meeting he has appointed?" she said, alarmed by his manner.

He made no reply, and scarcely noticing Monica, signed to the priest, who understood the gesture, and followed him into the adjoining room.

"What does this mean?" said Monica, uneasily.

"I cannot tell," replied Constance. "But I hope papa will not disobey the prince."

"Surely he will not," cried the other.

"All will depend upon the counsel given him," said Constance. "Unluckily, Father Jerome is no friend to Atherton Legh."

"But your influence will prevail."

"You are quite mistaken, Monica. Papa won't listen to me. You saw how sternly he regarded me just now. He is displeased with me, as if I were to blame, because things have gone contrary to his wishes."

"I cannot conceive why he dislikes Atherton so much," said Monica, "but I am sure his aversion is most unreasonable."

"I hoped it might be overcome," sighed Constance, "but I now begin to despair. Even the prince, I fear, will not be successful."

"Do you think Sir Richard has an ill-adviser?" remarked Monica, significantly.

"I hope not," rejoined Constance.

Let us now see what passed between Sir Richard and the priest when they were

For a few moments the baronet seemed indisposed to commence the conversation, but as Father Jerome remained silent, he forced himself to speak.

"I am placed in a very awkward dilemma, as you are doubtless aware," he said, "and scarcely know how to act. Having consented to meet Atherton Legh in the prince's presence I am unable to retreat with honour, and yet I cannot answer certain questions that will inevitably be put to me."

"Can you not brave it out?" rejoined Father Jerome. "The prince cannot be acquainted with any secret matters connected with this young man."

"He knows more than is desirable," rejoined the baronet. "Some one has evidently informed him that I have acted as the young man's guardian."

"Mr. Marriott cannot have betrayed your confidence?" remarked Father Jerome.

"I do not think so," rejoined the other.

"Who else can have given the information?" observed the priest. "Have you no suspicion?"

"Ha! a light flashes upon me. Should it be so! — though I would fain hope not—the meeting would be doubly dangerous—for she is to be present."

"I can set your mind at rest. She knows nothing more than this one fact."

"But that may lead to a discovery of all the rest," cried Sir Richard.

"Not since you are prepared. 'Tis a pity the packet was left with her."

"'Twas a great error, I admit. But I will not commit another imprudent act. I will not be interrogated by the prince."

"Again I say you had better brave it out than fly—and fly you must if you neglect to obey the prince's commands. Your disappearance will give rise to unpleasant suspicions."

"But some excuse may be framed. You can help me. You have a ready wit."

"Well, the invention must be plausible, or it won't pass. Suppose you go to Rawcliffe Hall to fetch some documents, which are necessary to a full explanation of this matter! You intend to come back to-morrow—but are unavoidably detained—and do not return till the prince has left Manchester."

"That will do admirably!" cried Sir Richard eagerly. "You have saved me. You must take my excuse to the prince. He will then believe it."

"But to give a colour to the excuse you must really go to Rawcliffe Hall."

"I require no urging," rejoined Sir Richard. "I am most anxious to get away, and heartily regret that I ever joined the insurrection. I wish I could make terms with the Government."

"Perhaps you may be able to do so—but of that hereafter," rejoined the priest. "First effect a secure retreat. I will do all I can to cover it."

"I will set off at once," said Sir Richard. "But I must take leave of my daughter."

"Better not," said the priest. "I will bid her adieu for you."

Sir Richard suffered himself to be persuaded, and presently left the room. Ordering his horse on the pretext of attending the muster of the Manchester Regiment, he rode out of the town.

Not till some quarter of an hour after the baronet's departure did Father Jerome present himself to the two damsels, who were alarmed at seeing him appear alone.

"Where is papa?" exclaimed Constance eagerly.

"He has started for Rawcliffe," replied the priest.

"Gone!—without a word to me! Impossible!" she cried.

"'Tis nevertheless true," replied Father Jerome, gravely. "He wished to avoid any discussion. He has gone to fetch certain documents, without which he declines to appear before the prince."

"His highness will regard it as an act of disobedience, and will be justly offended," cried Constance.

"I do not think so, when I have explained matters to him," rejoined the priest.

"I am not to be duped," said Constance, bitterly. "Atherton will learn nothing more."

XXIII.

THE PRINCE ATTENDS SERVICE AT THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

THIS being the festival of St. Andrew, as already intimated, the Scottish nobles and chiefs desired that a special morning service should be performed for them at the collegiate church, and arrangements were accordingly made for compliance with their request.

Prayers were to be read by the Rev. William Shrigley, one of the chaplains, and an avowed Nonjuror, and the sermon was to be preached by the Rev. Mr. Coppock,

chaplain to the Manchester Regiment, who was chosen for the occasion by the prince.

A certain number of men from each regiment being permitted to attend the service, the whole of the nave, except the mid aisle, which was reserved for the officers, was entirely filled by Highland soldiers, and as the men were in their full accoutrements, and armed with targets, claymores, and firelocks, the effect was exceedingly striking.

Yet more imposing was the scene when the long central aisle was crowded with officers—when the side aisles were thronged with the townspeople, and the transepts were full of ladies. Those present on that memorable occasion, and whose gaze ranged over the picturesque crowd of armed mountaineers, could not fail to be struck by the tall, graceful pillars on either side the nave, with their beautiful pointed arches, above which rose the clerestory windows—with the exquisitely moulded roof enriched with

sculptures and other appropriate ornaments —with the chantries—and with the splendidly carved screen separating the choir from the nave.

The choir itself, with its fine panelled roof and its thirty elaborately carved stalls —fifteen on each side—was reserved for the prince, and the nobles and chiefs with him.

These stalls, with their florid tabernacle work, gloriously carved canopies, and pendent pinnacles of extraordinary richness and beauty, were admirably adapted to the occasion. In front of the sedilia were book-desks, encircled with armorial bearings, cognisances, and monograms.

Around the chancel are several exquisite chantries, most of them possessing screens of rare workmanship; and in these chapels many important personages connected with the town, or belonging to the Jacobite party, were now assembled.

In the Lady chapel were some of the fellows of the church, who did not care to make themselves too conspicuous.

In the Jesus chantry were Dr. Byrom and his family, with Mr. Walley and Mr. Fowden; and in St. John's chapel were Dr. Deacon, Mr. Cattell, Mr. Clayton, and several others.

But not merely was the interior of the sacred fabric thronged, hundreds of persons who had failed to obtain admittance were collected outside.

Precisely at eleven o'clock, Prince Charles Edward, mounted on a richly caparisoned charger, preceded by a guard of honour, and attended by all the nobles and chieftains belonging to his army, rode up to the gates of the churchyard, where he alighted. A lane was formed for him by the spectators, through which he passed, and on entering the church by the south porch, he was ceremoniously conducted to the choir,

where he took his seat in the warden's stall.

Next to him sat the Duke of Perth, and on the same side were ranged the Duke of Athole, Lord George Murray, Lord Kilmarnock, Lord Elcho, Lord Ogilvie, Lord Balmerino, and the Marquis d'Eguilles. In the opposte stalls were Lord Pitsligo, Lord Nairne, Lord Strathallan, General Gordon of Glenbucket, Colonel Ker, Secretary Murray, and Sir Thomas Sheridan.

From the stall occupied by the prince, which was the first on the right of the choir, and commanded the whole interior of the edifice, the coup-d'œil of the nave with its compact mass of Highlanders was splendid, and as Charles gazed at it, he was filled with stirring thoughts, that were softened down, however, by the solemn sounds of the organ pealing along the roof.

Of course the Protestant form of worship

was adopted; but strict Romanist as he was, Charles allowed no symptom of disapproval to escape him, but listened devoutly to Mr. Shrigley, who performed the service admirably, being excited by the presence of the prince.

The reverend gentleman prayed for the king, but without naming the sovereign. All his hearers, however, knew that James the Third was meant.

Mr. Coppock was not so guarded. He prayed for James the Third, for Charles Prince of Wales, Regent of England, and for the Duke of York.

Taking for his text the words "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*," he preached a most fiery sermon, in which he announced the speedy restoration of the Stuart dynasty, and the downfal of the House of Hanover.

Whatever might have been thought of

this treasonable discourse by a certain portion of the congregation, no voice was raised against it. That it pleased the prince and his attendants was sufficient for the ambitious young divine.

XXIV.

THE PRINCE INSPECTS THE MANCHESTER REGIMENT.

On coming forth from the church, Charles and his attendants found the newly-formed Manchester Regiment drawn up in the churchyard.

The corps numbered about three hundred men; most of them being fine stalwart young fellows, averaging six feet in height. Till that morning none of them had donned their uniforms, or even shouldered a musket, but by the exertions of Colonel Townley, the Chevalier de John-

stone, and Sergeant Dickson, they had been got into something like order, and now presented a very creditable appearance.

The officers looked exceedingly well in their handsome uniforms—red faced with blue. On this occasion each wore a plaid waistcoat with laced loops, a plaid sash lined with white silk, and had a white cockade in his hat. In addition to the broadsword by his side, each officer had a brace of pistols attached to his girdle.

Though all, from the colonel downwards, were fine, handsome men, unquestionably the handsomest young man in the corps was Captain Legh.

The flag of the regiment was borne by Ensign Syddall. On one side was the motto—LIBERTY AND PROPERTY; on the other—CHURCH AND COUNTRY.

The standard-bearer looked proud of his office. Nothing now of the barber about Ensign Syddall. So changed was his aspect,

so upright his thin figure, that he could scarcely be recognised. To look at him, no one would believe that he could ever smile. He seemed to have grown two or three inches taller. His deportment might be somewhat too stiff, but he had a true military air; and his acquaintances, of whom there were many in the crowd, regarded him with wonder and admiration.

The ensign, however, took no notice of any familiar observations addressed to him, having become suddenly haughty and distant.

With the regiment were four field-pieces.

Their chargers having been brought round, Charles and his suite rode slowly past the front of the line—the prince halting occasionally to make a commendatory remark to the men, who responded to these gratifying observations by enthusiastic shouts.

"I am glad the flag of the regiment

has been intrusted to you, Syddall," said Charles to the new ensign. "No one, I am sure, could take better care of it."

"I will defend it with my life," replied Syddall, earnestly.

This hasty inspection finished, Charles quitted the churchyard with his suite, and rode back to his head-quarters.

The Manchester Regiment soon followed. Elated by the commendations of the prince, which they flattered themselves were merited, the men marched through the market-place, and past the Exchange to St. Ann's-square, in tolerably good order, and in high good humour, which was not diminished by the cheers of the spectators. Colonel Townley then gave them some necessary orders, after which they dispersed, and repaired to their various quarters.

XXV.

AN UNSATISFACTORY EXPLANATION.

HAVING partaken of a slight repast, the prince again mounted his charger and rode out of the town in a different direction from any he had previously taken, being desirous to see the country.

He was only attended by Colonel Ker and the Chevalier de Johnstone, having dismissed his guard of honour.

At that time the environs of Manchester were exceedingly pretty, and the prospects spread out before him had a wild character of which little can now be dis-

cerned. Smedley Hall formed the limit of his ride, and having gazed at this picturesque old structure, which was situated in a valley, with a clear stream flowing past it, and a range of bleak-looking hills in the distance, he turned off on the left, and made his way through a heathy and uncultivated district to Kersal Moor.

From these uplands he obtained a charming view of the valley of the Irwell, bounded by the collegiate church, and the old buildings around it, and after contemplating the prospect for a short time, he descended from the heights and returned to the town.

Not being expected at the time, he passed very quietly through the streets, and reached his head-quarters without hindrance, having greatly enjoyed his ride.

Immediately after his return a levée was held, which being more numerously

attended than that on the preceding day, occupied nearly two hours.

After this he had a conference with the magistrates in the audience-chamber, and he then repaired to his private cabinet, where he expected to find Sir Richard Rawcliffe and the others, whose attendance he had commanded.

Constance was there and Atherton, but in place of the baronet appeared Father Jerome. Repressing his displeasure, Charles graciously saluted the party, and then addressing Constance said:

"Why is not Sir Richard here, Miss Rawcliffe?"

"Father Jerome will explain the cause of his absence," she replied. "I had no conversation with him before his departure."

"Then he is gone!" cried Charles, frowning. "I trust your explanation of his strange conduct may prove satisfactory," he added to the priest.

"The step I own appears strange," replied Father Jerome, in a deprecatory tone; "but I trust it may be excused. Sir Richard has gone to Rawcliffe Hall to procure certain documents which he desires to lay before your royal highness."

"But why did he not ask my permission before setting out?" observed Charles, sternly.

"Unquestionably, that would have been the proper course," rejoined the priest. "But I presume he hoped to be back in time."

"He could not have thought so," cried Charles, sharply. "The distance is too great. He shrinks from the interrogations which he knows would be addressed to him. But I will not be trifled with. I will learn the truth. If he does not come I will send a guard for him. I will not detain you longer now, Miss Rawcliffe," he added to

Constance. "Possibly, I may require your attendance again, and yours, also, father."

On this intimation Constance made a profound obeisance, and retired with the priest.

As soon as they were gone, the prince's countenance assumed a very singular expression, and he said to Atherton:

"What think you of all this?"

"My opinion is that Sir Richard Rawcliffe does not mean to return, and has sent Father Jerome to make these excuses for him," replied Atherton.

"I have come to the same conclusion," replied Charles. "He has set my authority at defiance, but he shall find that I can reach him. You must set out at once for Rawcliffe Hall, and bring him hither."

"I am ready to obey your highness's orders," replied Atherton. "I have never

seen Sir Richard's residence; but I know it is situated near Warrington, about eighteen miles from Manchester. I can get there in a couple of hours—perhaps in less."

"Provided you bring back the unruly baronet before night I shall be satisfied," said Charles.

He then sat down at the table, on which writing materials were placed, wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper, and, after attaching the sign-manual to the order, gave it to Atherton.

"Sir Richard will not dare to resist that mandate," he said. "I do not think a guard will be necessary. But you shall take Sergeant Dickson with you. You will find him with the Chevalier de Johnstone at Lord George Murray's quarters. Show this order to Colonel Johnstone, and he will provide you with a good horse, and give all necessary directions

to the sergeant. He will also explain the cause of your absence to Colonel Townley. Understand that you are to bring back Sir Richard with you at all hazards."

"I will not fail," replied Atherton.

Bowing deeply, he then quitted the prince's presence, and proceeded at once to Lord George Murray's quarters in Deansgate, where he found the Chevalier de Johnstone and Sergeant Dickson.

The Chevalier de Johnstone understood the matter at once, and immediately ordered the sergeant to provide two strong horses for Captain Legh and himself, bidding him go well armed.

Although the sergeant was told by his colonel to lose no time, he easily prevailed upon Atherton to let him bid adieu to Helen, who, as the reader is aware, had found a lodging with Beppy Byrom.

Very little delay, however, occurred, for as the sergeant rode up to the doctor's dwelling, Helen, who seemed to be on the watch, rushed out to greet him, and learnt his errand, receiving a kiss at the same time.

XXVI.

THE RIDE TO RAWCLIFFE HALL.

Crossing the bridge, and passing through Salford, Atherton and his attendant proceeded at a rapid pace towards the pretty little village of Pendleton. Skirting the wide green, in the midst of which stood the renowned May-pole, they hastened on through a pleasant country to Eccles—proceeding thence, without drawing bridle, to Barton-on-Irwell.

The road they were now pursuing formed a sort of causeway, bounded on the left by the deeply-flowing river, and on the right

by the dark and dreary waste which could be seen stretching out for miles, almost as far as the town towards which they were speeding. This dangerous morass was then wholly impassable, except by those familiar with it; and, as Atherton's eye wandered over its treacherous surface, he pointed out to his attendant a distant spot on the extreme verge of the marsh, observing, with a singular smile:

"Yonder is Warrington."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Dickson. "Then we might shorten our distance materially by crossing the morass."

"No doubt, if we *could* cross it," rejoined Atherton. "But we should be swallowed up, horse and man, before we had proceeded far. Many an incautious traveller has met his death in Chat Moss."

"It looks an unchancy place, I must say," observed the sergeant, shuddering, as he gazed at it.

Beyond Boysnape the causeway narrowed, bringing them in dangerous proximity both with the river and the morass; but they rode on past Irlam, until they reached the point of junction between the Irwell and the Mersey—the last-named river dividing Cheshire from Lancashire. They had now ridden full ten miles; but, as their steeds showed no signs of fatigue, they went without slackening their pace to Glazebrook and Rixton. Chat Moss had been left behind, and for the last two miles they had been passing through a well-wooded district, and had now reached another dangerous morass, called Risley Moss, which compelled them to keep close to the Mersey. Little, however, could be seen of the river, its banks being thickly fringed with willows and other trees. Passing Martinscroft and Woolston, they held on till they came within half a mile of Warrington, even then a considerable town.

Though the bridge at Warrington had been destroyed, a ford was pointed out to them, and they were soon on the other side of the Mersey, and in Cheshire.

From inquiries which they now made at a small roadside inn where they halted for a few minutes to refresh themselves and their horses, they ascertained they were within a mile of Rawcliffe Park, and after a short colloquy with the host, who was very curious to learn what was doing at Manchester, and who told them he had seen Sir Richard Rawcliffe ride past some three or four hours ago, they resumed their journey, and soon arrived at the gates of the park.

XXVII.

RAWCLIFFE HALL.

THE domain was extensive, but had a neglected appearance, and did not possess any old timber, all the well-grown trees having been cut down in the time of the former proprietor, Sir Oswald Rawcliffe. Neither was the park picturesque, being flat, and in some places marshy. On one side it was bounded by the Mersey, and its melancholy look impressed Atherton as he gazed around.

Still he felt a singular interest in the place for which he could not account,

unless it were that Constance was connected with it.

At length, they came in sight of the old mansion, near which grew some of the finest trees they had yet seen. The house had a gloomy look that harmonised with the melancholy appearance of the park.

Atherton had never beheld the place before, yet he seemed somehow familiar with it. The wide moat by which it was surrounded, the drawbridge, the gate-tower, the numerous gables, the bay-windows, all seemed like an imperfectly recollected picture.

So struck was he with the notion that he drew in the rein for a few minutes, and gazed steadfastly at the antique mansion, endeavouring to recal the circumstances under which he could have beheld it, but it vanished like a dream.

Before riding up to the house, he held a

brief consultation with the sergeant, as to how it would be best to proceed.

Hitherto, they had seen no one in the park, which, as already stated, had a thoroughly neglected air; nor, as far as they could judge, had their approach been remarked by any of the inmates of the house.

Gloom seemed to brood over the place. So silent was it that it might have been uninhabited.

"If I had not been assured that Sir Richard is at home, I should not have thought so," remarked Atherton. "The house has not a very cheerful or hospitable air."

"Luckily, the drawbridge is down, or we might have been kept on the wrong side of the moat," remarked the sergeant. "My advice is that we enter the fort before we are discovered, or we may never get in at all."

Acting upon the counsel, Atherton put spurs to his horse, and rode up to the house, which did not look a whit more cheerful as he approached it, and without halting to ring the bell, dashed across the drawbridge, passed through the open gateway and entered the court-yard, which to the young man's great surprise did not look so neglected as the exterior of the mansion had led him to anticipate.

The noise they made on entering the court-yard seemed to have roused the inmates from the sleep into which they had apparently been plunged. An old butler, followed by a couple of footmen, came out of the house, and with evident alarm depicted in his countenance, requested to know their business.

"Our business is with Sir Richard Rawcliffe," replied Atherton. "We must see him immediately."

"I do not think Sir Richard will see you,

gentlemen," replied the butler. "He is much fatigued. I will deliver any message to him with which you may charge me."

"We must see him," cried the sergeant, authoritatively. "We come from the prince."

The butler no longer hesitated, but assuming a deferential air, said he would at once conduct the gentlemen to his master.

As they had already dismounted, he bade one of the servants take their horses to the stable, and ushered the unwelcome visitors into a large entrance-hall, in which a wood fire was burning.

Remarking that the butler stared at him very hard, Atherton said:

"You look at me as if you had seen me before. Is it so? I have no recollection of you."

"I don't think I have seen you before, sir," replied the man, gravely. "But I

have seen some one very like you. Whom shall I announce to Sir Richard?"

"I am Captain Legh," said Atherton. "But there is no necessity to announce me. Conduct me to your master at once."

The butler, though evidently uneasy, did not venture to disobey, but led him to a room that opened out of the hall. The sergeant followed close behind Atherton.

They had been ushered into the library. Sir Richard was writing at a table, but raising his eyes on their entrance, he started up, and exclaimed in an angry voice:

"Why have you brought these persons here, Markland? I told you I would not be disturbed."

"Your servant is not to blame, Sir Richard," interposed Atherton. "I insisted upon seeing you. I am sent to bring you to the prince."

"It is my intention to return to Manchester to-night," replied the baronet,

haughtily. "But I have some affairs to arrange."

"I shall be sorry to inconvenience you, Sir Richard," observed Atherton. "But my orders are precise. You must present yourself at the prince's head-quarters before midnight."

"I engage to do so," replied the baronet.

"But you must be content to accompany me, Sir Richard. Such are my orders from his royal highness."

"And mine," added Sergeant Dickson

Controlling his anger by a powerful effort, Sir Richard said with forced calmness:

"Since such are the prince's orders I shall not dispute them. I will return with you to Manchester. We will set out in two hours' time. In the interim I shall be able to arrange some papers which I came for, and which I desire to take with me. By that time you will have rested, and your horses will be ready for the journey."

Then turning to Markland, he added:

"Conduct Captain Legh and Sergeant Dickson to the dining-room, and set some refreshment before them without delay."

"Take me to the servants' hall, Mr. Markland," said Dickson. "I cannot sit down with my officer."

Just as Atherton was about to leave the room, Sir Richard stepped up to him and said in a low tone:

"Before we start, I should like to have a little conversation with you in private, Captain Legh."

"I am quite at your service now, Sir Richard," replied the young man.

He then glanced significantly at Dickson, who went out with the butler, leaving him alone with the baronet.

XXVIII.

A STARTLING DISCLOSURE.

When the door was closed, Sir Richard's manner somewhat changed towards the young man, and with less haughtiness than he had hitherto manifested, he said to him:

"Pray be seated. I have much to say to you."

Atherton complied, but for some minutes Sir Richard continued to pace rapidly to and fro within the room, as if unwilling to commence the conversation he had proposed.

At last, he seated himself opposite the

young man, who had watched him with surprise.

"Are you acquainted with the history of my family?" he inquired, looking steadfastly at his auditor.

"I have some slight acquaintance with it," replied Atherton.

"You are aware, I presume, that the Rawcliffes have occupied this old mansion for upwards of two centuries?"

Atherton bowed, but made no remark. Sir Richard went on:

"My ancestors have all been high and honourable men, and have handed a proud name from one generation to another. Would it not be grievous if a stain were affixed on a name, hitherto unsullied, like ours? Yet if this inquiry which the prince has instituted be pursued, such must infallibly be the case. A dark secret connected with our family may be brought to

light. Now listen to me, and you shall judge:

"Some twenty years ago Sir Oswald Rawcliffe, my elder brother, died, leaving a widow and an infant son. Lady Rawcliffe came to reside here with her child—do you note what I say?"

"I think I have heard that the child was stolen, under mysterious circumstances," said Atherton, "and that the lady subsequently died of grief."

"You have heard the truth," said Sir Richard, with a strange look. "As the child could not be found, I succeeded to the title and the estates."

A pause ensued, during which such fearful suspicions crossed Atherton that he averted his gaze from the baronet.

Suddenly, Sir Richard rose in his chair, leaned forward, and gazing fixedly at Atherton, exclaimed:

"What will you say if I tell you that the child who was carried off, and supposed to be dead, is still living? What will you say if I tell you that you are Conway Rawcliffe, the son of Sir Oswald, and rightful heir to the property?"

"Amazement!" cried the listener.

"For many years I have deprived you of your inheritance and your title—have appropriated your estates, and have dwelt in your house. But I have been haunted by remorse, and have known no happiness. Sleep has been scared from my eyelids by the pale lady who died of grief in this very house, and I have known no rest. But I shall sleep soundly soon," he added, with terrible significance. "I will make reparation for the wrongs I have done. I will restore all I have taken from you—house, lands, name, title."

Again there was a pause. The young man was struck dumb by astonishment,

and it was Sir Richard who broke silence.

"What think you I was engaged on when you entered this room? I will tell you. I was writing out a full confession of the crime I have committed in the hope of atoning for my guilt. Already I have narrated part of the dark story. I have told how you were carried off and whither you were conveyed; but I have yet to relate how you were brought up in Manchester in complete ignorance of the secret of your birth, and how I acted as your guardian. Full details shall be given so that your identity can easily be established. When my confession is finished, I will deliver it to you, and you can show it to the prince."

"However you may have acted previously, you are acting well now," remarked Atherton. "But I will no longer interrupt you in your task."

"Stay!" cried the baronet. "I will show you a room which I myself have not seen for years. I have not dared to enter it, but I can enter it now. Follow me!"

XXIX.

THE MYSTERIOUS CHAMBER.

OPENING a movable shelf in the bookcase, he disclosed a narrow passage, along which they proceeded till they came to a small back staircase, evidently communicating by a small outlet with the moat.

Mounting this staircase, Sir Richard unfastened a door, which admitted them to a dark corridor. From its appearance it was evident that this part of the mansion was shut up.

A stifling sensation, caused by the close,

oppressive atmosphere, affected Atherton, and vague terrors assailed him. Two doors faced them. Sir Richard opened one of the doors, and led his companion into an antechamber, the furniture of which was mouldering and covered with dust.

A door communicating with an inner room stood ajar. After a moment's hesitation Sir Richard passed through it, and was followed by Atherton.

The chamber was buried in gloom, but on a window-shutter being opened a strange scene was disclosed. At the further end of the apartment stood an old bedstead, which seemed fully prepared for some occupant, though it could not have been slept in for many years. Quilt and pillow were mildewed and mouldering, and the sheets yellow with age. The hangings were covered with dust. Altogether, the room had a ghostly look.

For some moments Atherton could not remove his gaze from that old bed, which seemed to exercise a sort of fascination, but when he looked at Sir Richard, he was appalled by the terrible change that had come over him.

He looked the picture of horror and despair. His pallid countenance was writhen with anguish, and his limbs shook. A deep groan burst from his labouring breast.

"The hour is near at hand," he muttered, in tones scarcely human. "But I am not yet ready. Spare me till my task is finished!"

With a ghastly look he then added to Atherton: "The whole scene rises before me as it occurred on that dreadful night. The room is hushed and quiet, and within that bed a child is peacefully slumbering on his mother's breast. A masked intruder comes in—admitted by the nurse, who has

betrayed her mistress. Unmoved by a picture of innocence that might have touched any heart less savage than his own, he snatches up the child, and is bearing it off when the mother awakes. Her piercing shriek still rings through my ears. I cannot describe what follows—but 'tis soon over—and when the worse than robber departs with his prize, he leaves the wretched mother lying senseless on the floor, and the nurse dead—slain by his ruthless hand!"

"Horror!" exclaimed Atherton, unable to control his feelings.

"Let us hence, or I shall become mad," cried Sir Richard, hurrying him away.

So bewildered was Atherton, that he could scarcely tell how he regained the library, but when he got there, he sank into a chair, and covered his eyes with his hands,

as if to exclude the terrible vision by which he had been beset.

On rousing himself from the stupor into which he had fallen, he perceived Sir Richard seated at the table, writing his confession, and feeling that his presence might disturb him he rose to depart.

Sir Richard rose likewise, and while conducting him to the door, said:

"I will send for you when I have done. I shall be best alone for a short time. But let me give you a word of counsel, and do not distrust it because it comes from me. 'Tis my wish, as you know, to repair the wrong I have done. I would not have you forfeit the lofty position you have just obtained."

"I hope I shall not forfeit it," said Atherton, proudly.

"You will not long hold it," rejoined Sir Richard, in a solemn tone, "unless you

withdraw from this ill-fated expedition. It will end in your destruction. Attend to my warning!"

"I cannot honourably retreat," said Atherton.

"You must," cried Sir Richard, sternly. "Why throw away your life from a fancied sense of honour, when such fair prospects are opening upon you? 'Twill be madness to persist."

Atherton made no reply, and Sir Richard said no more.

But as he opened the door he gave the young man a look so full of strange significance that he almost guessed its import.

Sir Richard paused for a moment as he went back to the table.

"What is the use of this?" he exclaimed aloud. "No remonstrance will deter him. He will go on to destruction. The estates will pass away from us. Perchance a few words, written at the last moment, may

change him! Heaven grant it. I will try. But now to complete my task. All will soon be over!"

With this he sat down at the table, and with a strange composure resumed his writing.

XXX.

A TERRIBLE CATASTROPHE.

On returning to the entrance-hall Atherton found Markland the butler. The old man looked at him very wistfully, and said:

"Excuse me, sir, if I venture to say a few words to you. Has an important communication been made to you by Sir Richard?"

"A very important communication indeed," replied Atherton. "And when I tell you what it is, I think I shall surprise you."

"No, you won't surprise me in the least,

sir," replied Markland. "The moment I set eyes upon you I felt certain that you were the rightful heir of this property. You are the very image of my former master, Sir Oswald. I hope Sir Richard intends to do you justice and acknowledge you?"

"Be satisfied, my good friend, he does," replied Atherton.

"I am truly glad to hear it," said Markland. "This will take off a weight that has lain on his breast for years, and make him a happy man once more. Strange! I always felt sure the infant heir would turn up. I never believed he was dead. But I didn't expect to behold so fine a young gentleman. I hope you are not going to leave us again now you have come back."

"I must leave you for a time, Markland, however inclined I may be to stay. I have joined the prince's army, and am a captain in the Manchester Regiment."

"So I heard from the gallant Highlander

who came with you. But things are changed now. Since you have become Sir Conway Rawcliffe——"

"What mean you, Markland?"

"Conway was the name of the infant heir who was stolen—he was so called after his mother, the beautiful Henrietta Conway."

"For the present I must remain Captain Legh," interrupted the young man. "Nor would I have a word breathed on the subject to your fellow-servants till I have spoken with Sir Richard. You understand?"

"Perfectly," replied the old butler. "You may rely on my discretion."

But though Markland was forbidden to give the young baronet his proper title, he could not be prevented from showing him the profoundest respect, and it was with great reverence that he conducted him to the dining-room, where they found Sergeant

Dickson seated at a table with a cold sirloin of beef before him flanked by a tankard of strong ale.

Atherton—as we shall still continue to call our hero—desired the sergeant not to disturb himself, but declined to follow his example, though urged by Markland to try a little cold beef.

The butler, however, would not be denied, but disappearing for a minute or two returned with a cobwebbed flask, which he uncorked, and then filling a big glass to the brim, handed it to the young gentleman with these words:

"This madeira was bottled some five-and-twenty years ago in the time of the former owner of this mansion, Sir Oswald Rawcliffe. I pray you taste it, Sir—— I beg pardon," he added, hastily correcting himself—"I mean Captain Legh."

As Atherton placed the goblet to his lips, but did not half empty it, the butler

whispered in his ear, while handing him a biscuit, "'Tis your father's wine."

Atherton gave him a look, and emptied the glass.

Another bumper was then filled for Sergeant Dickson, who smacked his lips, but declared that for his part he preferred usquebaugh.

"Usquebaugh!" exclaimed Markland, contemptuously. "Good wine is thrown away upon you, I perceive, sergeant. Nothing better was ever drunk than this madeira. Let me prevail upon you to try it again, Sir—Captain, I mean."

But as Atherton declined, he set down the bottle beside him, and left the room.

Full half an hour elapsed before he re-appeared, and then his looks so alarmed those who beheld him, that they both started to their feet.

"What is the matter?" cried Atherton,

struck by a foreboding of ill. "Nothing, I trust, has happened to Sir Richard?"

"I don't know—I hope not," cried the terrified butler. "I went into the library just now to see if his honour wanted anything. To my surprise he was not there, though I had been in the entrance-hall, and hadn't seen him go out. On the writing-table was a packet, that somehow attracted my attention, and I stepped forward to look at it. It was sealed with black wax, and addressed to Sir Conway Rawcliffe, Baronet."

Atherton uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and his forebodings of ill grew stronger.

"The sight of this mysterious packet filled me with uneasiness," pursued the butler. "I laid it down, and was considering what had become of Sir Richard, when I remarked that a secret door in one

of the bookcases, of which I was previously ignorant, was standing open. Impelled by a feeling stronger than curiosity, I passed through it, and had reached the foot of a small staircase, when I heard the report of a pistol, almost immediately succeeded by a heavy fall. I guessed what had happened; but not liking to go up-stairs alone, I hurried back as fast as I could, and came to you."

"However disinclined you may feel, you must go with me, Markland," said Atherton. "I know where we shall find Sir Richard. You must also come with us, sergeant. Not a moment must be lost."

Full of the direst apprehensions they set off. As they entered the library Atherton perceived the packet, which he knew contained the unhappy man's confession, lying on the writing-table, but he did not stop to take it up.

Dashing through the secret door he

threaded the passage, and ascended the narrow staircase, three steps at a time, followed by the others.

The door of the antechamber was shut, and he feared it might be locked, but it yielded instantly to his touch.

The room was empty; but it was evident that the dreadful catastrophe he anticipated had taken place in the inner room, since a dark stream of blood could be seen trickling beneath the door, which was standing ajar.

Atherton endeavoured to push it open, but encountering some resistance, was obliged to use a slight degree of force to accomplish his object, and he then went in closely followed by the others.

A dreadful spectacle met their gaze. Stretched upon the floor, amid a pool of blood, with a pistol grasped in his hand, showing how the deed had been done, lay Sir Richard.

He had shot himself through the heart, so that his death must have been almost instantaneous.

The sight would have been ghastly enough under any circumstances; but beheld in that chamber, so full of fearful associations, it acquired additional horror. The group gathered round the body—the young baronet in his military attire—the Highlander in his accoutrements—and the old butler—formed a striking picture. That the guilty man should die there seemed like the work of retribution.

As the nephew he had so deeply injured, and deprived of his inheritance, looked down upon his dark and stern visage, now stilled in death, he could not but pity him.

"May Heaven forgive him, as I forgive him!" he ejaculated.

"If he has sinned deeply, his penitence

has been sincere," said Markland, sorrowfully. "Half his time has been spent in fasting and prayer. Heaven have mercy on his sinful soul!"

"It seems to me as if he had something clutched in his left hand," remarked the sergeant.

"I think so, too," said Atherton. "See what it is."

Thereupon, Erick knelt down beside the body, and opening the fingers, which were not yet stiffened, took from them a small slip of paper, and gave it to Atherton.

It had been crushed in the death gripe, but on being unfolded, these warning words appeared:

"'Tis given to those on the point of death to see into the future, and I read danger and destruction in the expedition you have joined. Be warned by your unhappy uncle, and abandon it."

"Whatever may be the consequence, I cannot abandon the expedition," thought Atherton.

While forming this resolution, he gazed at his lifeless monitor, and it seemed to him as if a frown passed over the dead man's countenance.

XXXI.

SIR RICHARD RAWCLIFFE'S CONFESSION.

AFTER considering what ought to be done under circumstances so painful and extraordinary, Atherton left Sergeant Dickson with the body, and then descending with Markland to the hall, ordered him to assemble the whole house without delay, and acquaint them with the dreadful catastrophe that had occurred.

Thereupon, Markland rang the alarm bell, and the summons was immediately answered by all the male part of the household, and several women, who hurried

to the entrance-hall to see what was the matter.

In reply to their anxious inquiries, the butler told them what had happened, and the appalling intelligence was received with expressions of horror by the men, and by shrieks from the women—some of the latter seeming ready to faint.

Bidding all follow him who chose, Markland then led three or four stout-hearted men to the room where the dire event had occurred.

They found Sergeant Dickson watching beside the body, and, after regarding it for a few moments with fearful curiosity, they raised it from the floor, and placed it upon the bed.

This done, they all quitted the chamber of death, and the door was locked.

Markland, however, deemed it necessary to leave a man in the anteroom, and, having taken this precaution, he descended

with the others to the lower part of the house.

The sergeant then proceeded to the library to ascertain whether Captain Legh had made any change in his plans.

"No," replied Atherton, "I must return to Manchester to-night, in order to explain matters to the prince. If his royal highness can dispense with my services, I shall retire from the Manchester Regiment. If not, I must go on. That is my fixed determination."

"'Tis the resolve of a man of honour," replied the sergeant.

"I have to read through this paper, and besides, I have some directions to give," said Atherton. "But I shall start in an hour."

"Good," replied Erick. "I shall be quite ready."

And fancying Captain Legh desired to be alone, he left the room.

Shortly afterwards Markland appeared with lights, which he placed on the writing-table.

"I am very sorry to find you are resolved to go, sir," he remarked.

"If the prince can spare me I shall return at once."

"Our chance of seeing you again is but slight, sir," rejoined the butler, shaking his head. "The prince is not likely to part with you. Shall Sir Richard's groom, Holden, attend you? Should you have any message to send to me, he will bring it back."

"Yes, I will take him with me," replied Atherton. "Perhaps Miss Rawcliffe may require him."

"You have eaten nothing, sir."

"I have no appetite. But let a slight repast be prepared for me in half an hour."

The butler bowed and left the room.

As yet Atherton had only read certain

portions of his unhappy uncle's confession; but he now unfolded the manuscript with the intention of carefully perusing it.

The narration, written in a firm, bold hand, ran as follows.

In the name of the Almighty Power whom I have so deeply offended, and before whose throne I shall presently appear to answer for my manifold offences, I hereby solemnly declare that the young man now known as Atherton Legh is no other than my nephew Conway, only son of my brother Sir Oswald Rawcliffe, whom I have wickedly kept out of his inheritance for twenty years, by carrying him off when an infant, as I shall proceed to relate.

All possible reparation for the great wrong done him shall be made to my nephew. I hereby restore him all the

estates and property of which he has so long been deprived, and I implore his forgiveness.

Let it not be imagined that the possession of the property and title has brought me happiness! Since I have committed this terrible crime, peace has been a stranger to my breast. My slumbers have been disturbed by fearful dreams, and when sleep has fled from my pillow my brother's angry shade has appeared before me, menacing me with eternal bale for the wrong done to his son.

Sometimes another phantom has appeared—the shade of the sweet lady who died of grief for the loss of her infant.

Though I was thus wretched, and life had become a burden to me, my heart was hardened, and I still clung tenaciously to the lands and title I had so wickedly acquired. Though they brought me nothing but misery I could not give them up. I

recoiled with terror from the scaffold that awaited me if I avowed myself a robber and a murderer, for my hands were red with the blood of Bertha, the wretched nurse.

But my conduct was not altogether ill, and I trust that the little good I have done may tell in my favour. I had consigned my nephew to the care of strangers, but I watched over him. I supplied all his wants —educated him as a gentleman—and made him a liberal allowance.

It was my intention to have greatly increased the allowance, so as in part to restore my ill-gotten gains. But this was not to be. Heaven had other designs, and mine were thwarted.

For reasons that seemed good to me, though interested in the cause, I forbade my nephew to join the rising in favour of the House of Stuart; but he heeded not my counsel.

Suddenly, when I least expected it, discovery of my crime seemed imminent. From some information he had privily received, the prince's suspicions were awakened, and he commanded me to appear before him, and answer certain questions he meant to put to me in the presence of my nephew and my daughter.

From such a terrible ordeal as this I naturally shrank. Death appeared preferable. But before putting an end to an existence that had long been a burden to me, I resolved to make all the atonement in my power for my evil deeds. With that intent have I come here.

In the ebony cabinet standing in the library, which contains all my private papers and letters, will be found incontestable evidences that my nephew is entitled to the estates, and that he is, in fact, the long-lost Conway Rawcliffe.

'Tis meet I should die at Rawcliffe, and

in the very room where the crime was committed.

That I should thus rush unbidden into the presence of my Maker may seem to be adding to the weight of my offences, and to preclude all hope of salvation, but I trust in His mercy and forgiveness. He will judge me rightfully. He knows the torments I endure, and that they drive me to madness and despair. I must end them. Whether there will be rest in the grave for my perturbed spirit remains to be seen. Of the world I have already taken leave.

To the sole being to whom my heart clings with affection—to my daughter—I must now bid an eternal farewell! I cannot write to her, and she will understand why I cannot. I implore her prayers. When I am gone she will have no protector, and I trust that her cousin, Conway, will watch over her. My private property will

be hers. Though small in comparison with Rawcliffe, 'twill be enough.

I have still much to say, for thick-coming thoughts press upon me; but I must not give them way. Were I to delay longer, my resolution might waver. Adieu, Conway! Adieu, Constance! Forgive me! —pray for me!

RICHARD RAWCLIFFE.

Enclosed within the packet was the key of the cabinet.

There was likewise another manuscript written by the unhappy baronet and signed by him, giving full particulars of the terrible occurrence alluded to; but since the reader is already acquainted with the details it is not necessary to reproduce them.

Atherton was profoundly moved by the perusal of this letter, and remained for some time buried in reflection.

Rousing himself at length from the reverie

into which he had fallen, he looked round for the ebony cabinet, and easily discovered it. Unlocking it, he found that it contained a large bundle of letters and papers labelled in the late baronet's hand, "Documents relating to Conway Rawcliffe, with proofs of his title to the Rawcliffe estate."

He searched no further. He did not even untie the bundle, feeling certain it contained all the necessary evidences; but having carefully secured Sir Richard's last letter and confession, he locked the cabinet, and put the key in his pocket.

He then rang the bell, and when Markland made his appearance, he said to him:

"Before my departure for Manchester, Markland, it is necessary that I should give you some instructions, in case I should not be able to return, for the prince may be unwilling to release me from my engagements. I am sure you have faithfully served your late unfortunate master, and I

"I will not fail to consult her, sir. I I am sure she would desire that her fath remains should be laid in the vault bene the chapel where his ancestors repose, a that the funeral rites should be perform with the utmost privacy."

This conference ended, Atherton p ceeded to the dining-room, and partook a slight repast, after which he prepared his departure.

The horses had already been brou round by Holden the groom, and the ni being extremely dark, the court-yard v illumined by torches, their yellow glare vealing the picturesque architecture of t old mansion.

Before mounting his steed, Atherton ga his hand to Markland, who pressed it spectfully, earnestly assuring the you gentleman that all his directions should followed out.

The old butler then took leave of the sergeant, who had been in readiness for some minutes.

In consequence of the darkness, it was deemed advisable that Holden should lead the way. Accordingly, he was the first to cross the drawbridge, but the others kept close behind him.

"I will not fail to consult her, sir. But I am sure she would desire that her father's remains should be laid in the vault beneath the chapel where his ancestors repose, and that the funeral rites should be performed with the utmost privacy."

This conference ended, Atherton proceeded to the dining-room, and partook of a slight repast, after which he prepared for his departure.

The horses had already been brought round by Holden the groom, and the night being extremely dark, the court-yard was illumined by torches, their yellow glare revealing the picturesque architecture of the old mansion.

Before mounting his steed, Atherton gave his hand to Markland, who pressed it respectfully, earnestly assuring the young gentleman that all his directions should be followed out.

The old butler then took leave of the sergeant, who had been in readiness for some minutes.

In consequence of the darkness, it was deemed advisable that Holden should lead the way. Accordingly, he was the first to cross the drawbridge, but the others kept close behind him.

XXXII.

ATHERTON'S DECISION IS MADE.

It was with strange sensations that Atherton looked back at the darkling outline of the old mansion, and when it became undistinguishable in the gloom, he felt as if he had been indulging in an idle dream.

But no! the broad domains that spread around him on either side were his own. All he could discern belonged to him.

His meditations were not disturbed by either of his attendants, for the sergeant was a short distance behind him, and the

groom about twenty or thirty yards in advance. As they trotted on quickly they were soon out of the park, and were now making their way somewhat more slowly along the road leading to Warrington. Presently they turned off on the right in order to reach the ford, and were skirting the banks of the Mersey, when Holden came back and said that he perceived some men armed with muskets guarding the ford.

A brief consultation was then held. As the groom declared that the river was only fordable at this point, Atherton resolved to go on at all hazards.

As they drew near the ford they found it guarded—as Holden had stated—by half a dozen armed militia-men, who were evidently determined to dispute their passage.

"Stand! in the king's name!" cried the leader of the party in an authoritative voice. "We can discern that one of you is

a Highlander, and we believe you are all rebels and traitors. Stand! I say!"

"Rebels and traitors yourselves!" thundered the sergeant in reply. "We own no sovereign but King James the Third."

"Out of our way, fellows!" cried Atherton. "We mean to pass the ford!"

Drawing his sword as he spoke, he struck spurs into his steed, and dashed down the bank, followed closely by the sergeant and Holden—the former having likewise drawn his claymore.

The militia-men drew back but fired at them as they were crossing the river, though without doing them any harm.

Having escaped this danger, they proceeded at the same rapid pace as before, and in the same order, the groom riding about twenty yards in advance. The few travellers they met with got out of their way.

By the time they reached Chat Moss the

moon had risen, and her beams illumined the dreary swamp.

The scene looked far more striking than it did by daylight, but Atherton gazed at it with a different eye. Other thoughts now occupied his breast, and he seemed changed even to himself. When he tracked that road, a few hours ago, he was a mere adventurer—without name—without fortune —now he had a title and large estates. Reflections on this sudden and extraordinary change in his position now completely engrossed him, and he fell into a reverie which lasted till he reached Pendleton, and then waking up, as if from a dream, he was astonished to find he had got so far.

From this elevation the town of Manchester could be descried, and as the houses were again illuminated, and bonfires were lighted in different quarters, it presented a very striking appearance.

Just as Atherton crossed Salford Bridge,

the clock of the collegiate church tolled forth eleven, and so crowded were the streets, owing to the illuminations, that nearly another quarter of an hour was required to reach the prince's head-quarters.

Atherton was attended only by the groom, the sergeant having gone to report himself on his return to the Chevalier de Johnstone.

Dismounting at the gate, he entered the mansion, and orders having been given to that effect he was at once admitted to the prince, who was alone in his private cabinet.

Charles instantly inquired if he had brought Sir Richard Rawcliffe with him.

"He is unable to obey your royal highness's summons," replied the other.

"How?" exclaimed the prince, frowning.

"He is lying dead at Rawcliffe, having perished by his own hand. But he has left a written confession wherein he acknow-

ledges that he has wrongfully deprived me of my inheritance."

"This is strange indeed!" exclaimed the prince. "His extraordinary conduct to you is now explained, and the mystery that hung over your birth is solved. You are the lost son of the former baronet. I suspected as much, and meant to force the truth from Sir Richard. However, he has spared me the trouble. Pray let me know all that has occurred?"

Atherton then commenced his relation, to which the prince listened with the greatest interest, and when the story was brought to a conclusion he said:

"I will not affect to pity your unhappy uncle. He has escaped earthly punishment, and perhaps the deep remorse he appears to have felt may obtain him mercy on High. Let us hope so—since he has striven at the last to make some amends for his heavy offences. But to turn to

yourself. Your position is now materially changed. You entered my service as an unknown adventurer, and not as a wealthy baronet. Considering this, and feeling, also, that I am under great personal obligation to you, I will not wait for any solicitation on your part, but at once release you from your engagement to me."

Atherton was much moved.

"Your royal highness overwhelms me by your kindness," he said. "But though Rawcliffe Hall and its domains may be mine by right, I do not intend to deprive Constance of the property. Furthermore, I shall not assume my real name and title till the close of the campaign. For the present I shall remain Atherton Legh. I trust your highness will approve of the course I intend to pursue?"

"I do approve of it," replied Charles, earnestly. "The resolution you have taken does you honour. Since you are deter-

mined to join me, it shall not be as a mere officer in the Manchester Regiment, but as one of my aides-de-camp. All needful explanation shall be given to Colonel Townley. I shall march at an early hour in the morning. But no matter. You can follow. You must see Constance before you leave, and if you are detained by any unforeseen cause, I will excuse you. Nay, no thanks. Good-night."

End of the Second Book.

BOOK III.

THE MARCH TO DERBY, AND THE RETREAT.

I.

AN OLD JACOBITE DAME.

NEXT morning the prince quitted Manchester, marching on foot at the head of two regiments of infantry which formed the advanced guard. The main body of the army, with the cavalry and artillery was to follow at a later hour.

As the two regiments in question, which were composed of remarkably fine men, marched up Market-street-lane, preceded by a dozen pipers, they were accompanied by a vast concourse of people, who came to witness the prince's departure, and

shouted lustily as he came forth from his head-quarters, attended by Sir Thomas Sheridan and Colonel Ker.

Designing to make Macclesfield the limit of his first day's march, Charles took the road to Cheadle, and several hundred persons walked, or rather ran, by the side of the Highlanders for a mile or two, when they dropped off and returned, being unable to keep up with the active mountaineers.

Parties of men had been sent on previously to make a temporary bridge across the Mersey, by felling trees; but the bridge not being completed on his arrival, the prince forded the river at the head of his troops.

On the opposite bank of the Mersey, several Cheshire gentlemen of good family were waiting to greet him, and wish him success in his enterprise.

Among them was an aged dame, Mrs. Skyring, who, being very infirm, was led forward by a Roman Catholic priest. Kneeling before the prince, she pressed his hand to her lips.

Much impressed by her venerable looks, Charles immediately raised her, and on learning her name, told her he had often heard of her as a devoted adherent of his house.

"Give ear to me for a few moments, I pray you, most gracious prince," she said, in faltering accents. "Eighty-five years ago, when an infant, I was lifted up in my mother's arms to see the happy landing at Dover of your great uncle, King Charles the Second. My father was a staunch Cavalier, served in the Civil Wars, and fought at Worcester. My mother was equally attached to the House of Stuart. I inherited their loyalty and devotion.

When your grandsire, King James the Second, was driven from the throne, I prayed daily for his restoration."

"You did more than pray, madam," said the prince. "I am quite aware that you remitted half your income to our family; and this you have done for more than fifty years. I thank you in my grandsire's name —in my father's name—and in my own."

Sobs checked the old lady's utterance for a moment, but at length she went on:

"When I learnt that you were marching on England at the head of an army, determined to drive out the Hanoverian usurper, and regain your crown, I was filled with despair that I could not assist you; but I sold my plate, my jewels, and every trinket I possessed. They did not produce much —not half so much as I hoped—but all they produced is in this purse. I pray your royal highness to accept it as an earnest of my devotion."

While uttering these words, which greatly touched Charles, she again bent before him, and placed the purse in his hands.

"Pain me not by a refusal, I implore you, most gracious prince," she said. "And think not you are depriving me of aught. I cannot live long, and I have no children. 'Tis the last assistance I shall be able to render your royal house—for which I have lived, and for which I would die."

"I accept the gift, madam," replied Charles, with unaffected emotion, "with as much gratitude as if you had placed a large sum at my disposal. You are, indeed, a noble dame; and our family may well be proud of a servant so loyal! If I succeed in my enterprise, I will recompense you a hundred fold."

"I am fully recompensed by these gracious words, prince," she rejoined.

"Nay, madam," he cried, pressing her hand to his lips; "mere thanks are not

enough. You have not confined yourself to words."

"My eyes are very dim, prince," said the old dame; "and what you say to me will not make me see more clearly. Yet let me look upon your face, and I will tell you what I think of you. I am too old to flatter."

"You will not offend me by plain speaking," said Charles, smiling.

"You are a true Stuart," she continued, trying to peruse his features. "But there are some lines in your comely countenance that bode——"

"Not misfortune, I trust?" said Charles, finding she hesitated.

She regarded him anxiously, and made an effort to reply, but could not.

"What ails you, madam?" cried the prince, greatly alarmed by the deathly hue that overspread her features.

Her strength was gone, and she would

have fallen, if he had not caught her in his arms.

Her friends, who were standing near, rushed forward to her assistance.

"Alas, all is over!" exclaimed Charles, mournfully, as he consigned her inanimate frame to them.

"She is scarcely to be pitied, prince," said the Romish priest. "'Tis thus she desired to die. May the angels receive her soul, and present it before the Lord."

"The sum she has bestowed upon me shall buy masses for the repose of her soul," said Charles.

"Nay, prince," rejoined the priest. "Her soul is already at rest. Employ the money, I beseech you, as she requested."

Much affected by this incident, Charles continued his march through a fine champaign country, well-timbered and richly-cultivated, containing numerous homesteads,

and here and there an old hall of the true Cheshire type, and comprehending views of Bowden Downs and Dunham Park on the left, with Norbury and Lyme Park on the right.

At Headforth Hall he halted with his body-guard, and claimed the hospitality of its owner; while his troops marched on to Wilmslow, and forced the inhabitants of that pretty little village to supply their wants.

From Wilmslow the prince's march was continued to Macclesfield, where he fixed his quarters at an old mansion near the Chester Gate.

II.

ATHERTON'S GIFT TO CONSTANCE.

THE prince's departure from Manchester took place on Sunday, December the 1st; but as the main body of the army did not leave till the middle of the day, and great confusion prevailed in the town, no service took place in the churches.

The cavalry was drawn up in St. Ann's-square; the different regiments of infantry collected at various points in the town; and the Manchester Regiment assembled in the collegiate churchyard.

While the troops were thus getting into

order, preparatory to setting out for Macclesfield, a great number of the inhabitants of the town came forth to look at them—very much increasing the tumult and confusion.

The Manchester Regiment got into marching order about noon, and was one of the first to quit the town. Officers and men were in high spirits, and looked very well.

As the regiment passed up Market-street-lane, with Colonel Townley riding at its head, the colours borne by Ensign Syddall, and the band playing, it was loudly cheered.

The regularity of the march was considerably interfered with by the number of persons who accompanied their friends as far as Didsbury, and supplied them rather too liberally with usquebaugh, ratifia, and other spirituous drinks.

The courage of the men being raised to a high pitch by these stimulants, they ex-

pressed a strong anxiety for an early engagement with the Duke of Cumberland's forces, feeling sure they should beat them.

After a short halt at Didsbury, their friends left them, and their courage was somewhat cooled by fording the river below Stockport. They were likewise obliged to wade through the little river Bollin, before reaching Wilmslow, where they halted for the night.

Atherton had not yet left Manchester. He had some business to transact which obliged him to employ a lawyer, and he was engaged with this gentleman for two or three hours in the morning. He had previously written to Constance to say that it was necessary he should see her before his departure, and as soon as his affairs were arranged he rode to Mrs. Butler's house in Salford.

Leaving his horse with Holden, by whom he was attended, he entered the garden, and

was crossing the lawn, when he encountered Jemmy Dawson, who, having just parted with Monica, looked greatly depressed.

In reply to his anxious inquiries, Jemmy informed him that Constance had borne the shock better than might have been expected, and had passed the night in prayer. "I have not seen her," he said, "but Monica tells me she is now perfectly composed, and however much she may suffer, she represses all outward manifestation of grief. In this respect she is very different from Monica herself, who, poor girl! has not her emotions under control, and I left her in a state almost of distraction."

Without a word more he hurried away, while Atherton entered the house, and was shown into a parlour on the ground floor. No one was in the room at the time, and his first step was to lay a packet on the table.

Presently Constance made her appear

ance. Her features were excessively pale, and bore evident traces of grief; but she was perfectly composed, and Atherton thought he had never seen her look so beautiful.

She saluted him gravely, but more distantly than before.

"I cannot condole with you on the terrible event that has occurred," he said; but I can offer you my profound sympathy. And let me say at once that I freely and fully forgive your unfortunate father for all the wrong he has done me."

"I thank you for the assurance," she rejoined. "'Tis an infinite relief to me, and proves the goodness of your heart."

"Do not dwell upon this, Constance," he said. "Hereafter we will talk over the matter—not now. Should you feel equal to the journey, I hope you will immediately return to Rawcliffe."

"I will return thither, with your kind

permission, to see my poor father laid in the family vault. That sad duty performed I shall quit the house for ever."

"No, Constance—that must not be," he rejoined. "My object in coming hither this morning is to tell you that I do not design to dispossess you of the house and property. On the contrary, you will be as much the mistress of Rawcliffe Hall as ever —more so, perhaps. Nay, do not interrupt me—I have not finished. Many things may happen. I may meet a soldier's fate. The hazardous enterprise I am bent upon may fail—I may be captured—may die as a rebel, on the scaffold. If I should not return, the house and all within it—all the domains attached to it—are yours. By that deed I have made them over to you."

And he pointed to the packet which he had laid upon the table.

Constance was greatly moved. Tears rushed to her eyes, and for a few minutes

she was so overpowered that she could not speak.

Atherton took her hand, which she did not attempt to withdraw.

"I am profoundly touched by your generosity," she said. "But I cannot accept your gift."

"Nay, you must accept it, dearest Constance," he said. "You well know you have my heart's love, and I think you will not refuse to be mine."

"'Twould be too great happiness to be yours," she rejoined. "But no—no—I ought not to consent."

By way of reply, he pressed her to his heart, and kissed her passionately.

"Now will you refuse?" he cried.

"How can I, since you have wrested my consent from me?" she rejoined. "But how am I to address you?"

"You must still call me Atherton Legh," he replied.

"Well, then, dearest Atherton, my heart misgives me. In urging you to join this expedition I fear I have done wrong. Should any misfortune happen to you I shall deem myself the cause of it. I tremble to think of the consequences of my folly. Must you go?" she added, looking imploringly at him.

"Yes," he replied. "Not even you, dearest Constance, can turn me from my purpose. The prince has relieved me from my engagement, but I cannot honourably retire. Come what may, I shall go on."

"I will not attempt to dissuade you from your purpose," she rejoined. "But I find it doubly hard to part now. And your danger seems greater."

"Mere fancy," he said. "You love me better than you did—that is the cause of your increased apprehension."

For some moments they remained gazing at each other in silence.

At last Atherton spoke.

"'Tis with difficulty that I can tear myself away from you, dearest Constance. But I hope soon to behold you again. Meantime, you will remain at Rawcliffe Hall as I have suggested."

"I will do whatever you desire," she rejoined.

"I hope you will induce Mrs. Butler and Monica to stay with you, and that I shall find them at Rawcliffe on my return. I would not anticipate disaster—but 'tis desirable to be prepared for the worst. Should ill success attend our enterprise, and I should be compelled to seek safety in flight, I might find a hiding-place in Rawcliffe Hall."

"No doubt," she rejoined. "You could easily be concealed there — even should strict search be made. All necessary pre-

parations shall be taken. Whenever you arrive at Rawcliffe you will find all ready for you. I will go there to-morrow, and I trust Mrs. Butler and Monica will be able to follow immediately. Will you not see them?"

"Not now," he replied. "Bid them farewell for me. If I stay longer, my resolution might give way. Remember what I have said to you. In any event you are mistress of Rawcliffe. Adieu!"

Pressing her again to his breast, he rushed out of the room.

III.

A RETREAT RESOLVED UPON.

MOUNTING his horse which he had left at the gate of Mrs. Butler's residence, and followed by Holden, Atherton rode towards the bridge—being obliged to pass through the town in order to gain the Stockport road.

The place was still in a state of great confusion—none of the cavalry having as yet departed; but he contrived to make his way through the crowded thoroughfares, and was soon in the open country.

At Didsbury he overtook the Man-

chester Regiment and had a long conversation with Colonel Townley, who explained to him that he meant to pass the night at Wilmslow.

Atherton then pursued his journey, crossed the Mersey at Cheadle, and came up with the prince and the advanced guard about four miles from Macclesfield. He was then sent on to make preparations for his royal highness, and executed his task very satisfactorily.

On the following day, while the prince, with the infantry, continued his march to Leek, Lord George Gordon with his regiment of horse proceeded to Congleton, and Captain Legh received orders from his royal highness to accompany him.

At Congleton information being obtained that the Duke of Cumberland was posted at Newcastle-under-Lyne with ten thousand men, Lord George went thither to reconnoitre, and found that the duke, on hear-

ing of the onward march of the insurgent forces, had retired with his army on Lichfield.

With marvellous despatch Atherton rode across the country and brought the intelligence to Charles, who had arrived at Leek.

No change, however, was made in the prince's plans. He did not desire an engagement with the duke, but rather to elude him.

Accordingly, he pressed on, and on the fourth day after leaving Manchester, arrived with his entire forces at Derby.

Charles was still full of confidence, and as he was now a day's march nearer London than the enemy, he persuaded himself that he should be able to reach the capital without hazarding a battle. Though he had been coldly received at all places since he left Manchester, and had not obtained any more recruits, he was not discouraged.

He fixed his head-quarters at a large mansion in Full-street, which has since been demolished.

On the morning after his arrival at Derby, he rode round the town, attended only by Colonel Ker and Captain Legh, and was very coldly received by the inhabitants—no cheers attending his progress through the streets, and many of the houses being shut up.

Much dispirited by this unfavourable reception, he returned to his head-quarters, where a council of war was held, which was attended by all the leaders of his army.

The general aspect of the assemblage was gloomy, and far from calculated to raise his spirits. Sir Thomas Sheridan alone seemed to retain his former confidence.

Graciously saluting them all, Charles said:

"I have summoned you, my lords and gentlemen, simply to inform you that after

halting for another day in Derby to refresh my troops, I shall proceed with all possible despatch, and without another halt, if I can avoid it—to London—there to give battle to the usurper. From the feeling evinced towards me, I doubt not I shall obtain many recruits during the hurried march, and perhaps some important reinforcements—but be this as it may, I shall persevere in my design."

He then looked round, but as he encountered only gloomy looks, and all continued silent, he exclaimed sharply:

"How is this? Do you hesitate to follow me further?"

"Since your royal highness puts the question to us," replied Lord George Gordon, gravely, "I am bound to answer it distinctly. We think we have already done enough to prove our devotion. Feeling certain we have no chance whatever of success, we decline to throw away our

lives. We have now reached the very heart of England, and our march has been unopposed, but we have obtained none of the large reinforcements promised us, and only a single regiment at Manchester. Scarcely any person of distinction has joined us—and very few have sent us funds. Since we left Manchester we have been everywhere coldly received—and here, at Derby, we are regarded with unmistakable aversion. The populace are only held in check by our numbers. Further south, the disposition would probably be still more unfavourable, and retreat would be out of the question. If your royal highness can show us letters from any persons of distinction promising aid, or can assure us that a descent upon the English shores will be made from France, we are willing to go on. If not, we must consult our own safety."

"What do I hear?" cried the prince, who had listened in the utmost conster-

nation. "Would you abandon me—now that we have advanced so far—now that victory is assured?"

"Our position is critical," replied Lord George. "If we advance further, our retreat will be cut off by Marshal Wade, who is close in our rear, and by the Duke of Cumberland, who has an army doubling our own in number, only a few leagues from us. If we hazard a battle, and obtain a victory, the losses we should necessarily sustain would so weaken our forces, that without reinforcements, we could not hope to vanquish the large army which we know is encamped at Finchley to secure the capital. Retreat is, therefore, unavoidable."

"Is this the unanimous opinion?" demanded Charles, looking anxiously round at the assemblage.

With the exception of Mr. Murray, the secretary, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and the Marquis d'Eguilles, every voice answered:

"It is."

"Then leave me," cried the prince, fiercely and scornfully. "Leave me to my fate. I will go on alone."

"If your royal highness will view the matter calmly, you will perceive that we are not wanting in fidelity and attachment to your person in making this proposition," said Lord Kilmarnock. "The cause here is hopeless. Let us return to Scotland, where we shall find reinforcements and obtain aid and supplies from France."

"No; I will not return to Scotland ingloriously," cried Charles.

"Listen to me, prince," said the Duke of Perth. "There is every inducement to return to Scotland, where a large force awaits you. I have just received intelligence that my brother, Lord John Drummond, has landed at Montrose with his regiment newly raised in France. With the Highlanders whom we left behind, this will

make a large force—probably three thousand men."

"And no doubt there will be large additions," said Sir Thomas Sheridan. "By this time the Irish Brigade must have embarked from France, with the promised French regiments."

"There is nothing for it but a retreat to Scotland," said Lord Pitsligo. "It would be madness to face an army of thirty thousand men."

"You are a traitor like the rest, Pitsligo," cried the prince, fiercely.

The old Scottish noble flushed deeply, and with difficulty mastered his indignation.

"I never thought to hear that opprobrious term applied to me by one of your royal house, prince," he said. "But since you have stigmatised all these loyal gentlemen in the same manner, I must bear the reproach as best I can."

"Forgive me, my dear old friend," cried

Charles, seizing his hand, and pressing it warmly. "I meant not what I said. No one could possess stauncher friends than I do—no one could appreciate their devotion more profoundly than myself. But my heart is crushed by this bitter and unexpected disappointment. It has come upon me like a clap of thunder—at the very moment when I anticipated success. Since it must be so, we will retreat, though it will half kill me to give the word. Leave me now, I pray of you. I will strive to reconcile myself to the alternative."

Thus enjoined, they all quitted the chamber, and Charles was left alone.

Flinging himself into a chair he remained for some time, with his face buried in his hands.

When he raised his eyes, he saw Atherton standing beside him.

"I knew not you were here," said the prince.

"I came to learn your royal highness's commands," replied the other. "Something, I fear, has greatly disturbed you."

"Disturbed me! ay!" cried Charles. "I am forced to retreat."

"By the enemy?" exclaimed Atherton.

"By my generals," replied Charles. "We shall advance no further. You may prepare to return to Manchester."

IV.

HOW THE MANCHESTER REGIMENT WAS WELCOMED ON ITS RETURN.

CHARLES could not shake off the bitter disappointment he experienced at this sudden and unlooked-for extinction of his hopes. He had made up his mind to march on London, and he thought his Highland army would follow him. But he now discovered his mistake.

He did not go forth again during the day, but shut himself up in his room, and left Lord George Gordon and the Duke of Perth to make all arrangements necessary for the retreat.

They decided to pass through Manchester on the way to Carlisle. The men were kept in profound ignorance of the change of plan, but when they discovered that they were retreating their rage and disappointment found vent in the wildest lamentations. "Had they been beaten," says the Chevalier de Johnstone, "their grief could not have been greater." It was almost feared they would mutiny.

On the Manchester Regiment the retreat had a most dispiriting effect. Officers and men had joined on the understanding that they were to march to London, and they were deeply mortified when they found they were to retreat to Scotland.

The men looked sullen and downcast, and so many desertions took place that the ranks were perceptibly thinned. It was certain that two or three of the officers only waited a favourable opportunity to escape.

he third day the Manchester Regi-
hich formed part of the advanced
rrived at Macclesfield. Next morn-
an early hour, they proceeded to
ster. Alarming reports had been
that the Duke of Cumberland was in
rsuit with his whole army; but the
r turned out to be false.

he officers and men composing the
ent army expected a reception like
they had previously experienced in
hester, they were greatly mistaken.
ooner was the town cleared of the in-
ng army, than the Whigs and Presby-
ns resumed their influence, and the
e mob changed with them.

umultuous crowds now went about the
n shouting "Down with the Pretender!
wn with the Jacobites!" Nor did the
horities interfere, them have
r own way.

n consequence nse, great mis-

chief was done. The mob threatened to pull down Dr. Deacon's house in Fennel-street, broke his windows, and might have proceeded to frightful extremities if they had laid hands upon him.

Two days afterwards a rumour was designedly spread by the Presbyterians that Marshal Wade had arrived at Rochdale with his army, and would shortly enter Manchester; and this had the effect intended of exciting the mob to further violence. The rumour, however, had no foundation, and the tumult began to subside.

Meantime, the magistrates and many of the important personages who had quitted the town, began to return, thinking the danger was past, and something like order was restored.

The position, however, of the Jacobites was by no means secure, since disturbances might at any time occur, and they were afforded very little protection.

After the lapse of a week, during which reliable intelligence had been received that the Highland army had arrived at Derby without encountering any opposition, and even staunch Whigs had began to think that the intrepid young prince would actually succeed in reaching London, news came that the rebels were retreating without a battle, and were then at Leek on their way back.

At first this news, which appeared improbable, was received with incredulity, but it was speedily confirmed by other messengers.

A consultation was then held by the boroughreeve, constables, and other magistrates as to the possibility of offering any resistance; but as the militia had been disbanded, and it was doubtful whether Marshal Wade would come to their assistance, the idea was given up.

But after some discussion Dr. Mainwaring and Justice Bradshaw sent the bellman

round to give notice that, as the rebels might be speedily expected, all the loyal inhabitants were enjoined to rise and arm themselves with guns, swords, halberts, pickaxes, shovels, or any other weapons, to resist the rebels, and prevent them from entering the town until the arrival of the king's forces.

In consequence of this notice several thousand persons, armed in the manner suggested, assembled in the open fields beyond Market-street-lane, where they were harangued by Dr. Mainwaring, who urged them to spoil the roads by breaking them up, and throwing trees across them, and promised to send the country folk to their aid.

Having uttered this he left the defence of the town to the inhabitants, and rode off; but he fulfilled his promise, and sent a number of country folk armed with scythes and sickles, but these rough fellows caused

such a tumult that another notice had to be given by the bellman commanding the mob to lay down their arms and disperse, and the country folk to return to their domiciles.

These contradictory orders produced considerable dissatisfaction, and were not obeyed.

One party more valiant than the rest marched to Cheadle ford, under the leadership of Mr. Hilton, with the intention of destroying the temporary bridge contrived by the insurgents, but before they could accomplish their task, they were disturbed and ignominiously put to flight by Colonel Townley and the Manchester Regiment.

On arriving at Manchester, Colonel Townley and his men were welcomed by a shower of stones and other missiles from the mob assembled at the top of Market-street-lane. Upon this the colonel called out that if another stone was thrown, and

the mob did not quietly disperse, he would fire upon them.

Alarmed by the menacing looks of the soldiers, who were greatly incensed by this treatment on the part of their fellow-townsmen, the mob took to their heels.

During a subsequent disturbance Ensign Syddall was taken prisoner, but was rescued by his comrades.

V.

A FRESH SUBSIDY DEMANDED.

On the arrival of the prince with the main body of the army, comparative tranquillity was restored. But it was evident that the feeling of the inhabitants was totally changed. There were no joyful demonstrations—no bonfires—no illuminations.

Charles returned to his former residence at the top of Market-street-lane; the Duke of Perth, Lord Tullibardine, Lord George Murray, Lord Pitsligo, and the other Scottish nobles and chiefs repaired to the houses

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they had previously occupied; and the men billeted themselves in their old quarters. But so unfriendly were the inhabitants to the Manchester Regiment that it was with difficulty that the officers and men could find quarters.

As night drew on, and a tendency to riot was again manifested, the bellman was sent round to warn the inhabitants that not more than two persons would be allowed to walk together in the streets after dark, unless guarded by the prince's troops, and that any attempt at tumult or disturbance would be severely punished.

In addition to this pickets of men patrolled the streets throughout the night, so that the town was kept tolerably quiet.

On the same evening about eight o'clock a meeting of the principal inhabitants took place at the Bull's Head—a warrant having been sent to the magistrates by the prince's secretary, Mr. Murray, commanding them,

on pain of military execution, to raise a subsidy of five thousand pounds from the town by four o'clock on the following day.

"What is to be done?" demanded Mr. Walley. "I fear it will be impossible to raise the large sum required by the appointed time—and if we fail we are to be held responsible with our lives. You must help us, gentlemen."

And he looked round at the assemblage, but no offer was made.

"Surely, you won't allow us to be shot?" cried Mr. Fowden.

"This is a mere threat," said old Mr. James Bayley, an eminent merchant of the town. "The prince cannot be in earnest."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Bayley," rejoined Mr. Fowden. "It is no idle threat. The prince is so highly offended by the reception given him that he has laid this heavy

tax upon the town—and he will have it paid."

"The contributions must be levied by force," observed Mr. Walley. "We shall never get the money in any other way."

"Such a course will render you extremely unpopular," observed Mr. Bayley.

"Better be unpopular than be shot, Mr. Bayley," rejoined Mr. Fowden. "Try to place yourselves in our position, gentlemen. Will you help us to pay the money in case we should be driven to extremity?"

But no answer was made to the appeal, and the magistrates were in despair.

At this moment the door opened, and Colonel Townley, attended by Captain Dawson, Captain Deacon, and Ensign Syddall, entered the room.

The magistrates rose in consternation, wondering what was the meaning of the visit.

"Pardon my intrusion, gentlemen," said

the colonel, saluting them. "But I think I can help you out of a difficulty. I am aware that five thousand pounds must be raised from the town by to-morrow afternoon. Feeling certain you will never be able to accomplish this task unassisted, I beg to offer you my aid. You shall have a party of men, under the command of these officers, to go round with you, and help you to make the collection."

"We gladly accept your offer, colonel," cried both magistrates eagerly.

"The plan will relieve you from all personal responsibility," said Townley; "and will secure the contributions."

The magistrates were profuse in their thanks, and it was then arranged that the party should commence their rounds at an early hour next morning.

VI.

A FALSE MESSAGE BROUGHT TO HELEN.

Helen Carnegie had not accompanied her lover in the march to Derby, but had been persuaded by Beppy Byrom to remain with her at Manchester. Thinking that an immediate engagement with the Duke of Cumberland was inevitable, the sergeant consented to the arrangement; but he missed his faithful companion sadly. He had become so accustomed to having her by his side that it seemed as if he had lost his right hand. He tried to occupy his thoughts by strict attention to his duty

—but it would not do. So miserable did he feel at the separation, that he was half reconciled to the retreat from Derby by the thought that he should soon see her again.

Helen suffered quite as much—perhaps more. Independently of being constantly near her lover, it had been her pride and pleasure to be with the Highland army, and when the troops moved off without her, she felt as if her heart would break, and she would certainly have followed, if she had not been restrained by Beppy. Familiar as she was with all the various incidents of a march, she pictured them to herself with the greatest distinctness, and spoke of all that the sergeant was doing.

"Oh! he win miss me sairly," she cried. "He win want me to cheer him up, when his spirits are low. I ought not to have left him. And what if he shouldna come back!"

"Don't make yourself uneasy, Helen,"

said Beppy. "He is certain to return. Papa says the prince's army will be forced to retreat."

"Na! na! that win never be!" cried Helen. "The prince win never turn back! The Highlanders may be all kilt, but turn back!—never!"

The rumour, however, at length reached Manchester that the prince was actually retreating, and Helen's delight at the thought of seeing her lover again quite overcame her vexation at what she looked upon as a disgrace.

But the regiment to which the sergeant belonged, and which was commanded by the Chevalier de Johnstone, did not reach Manchester till late in the day, and Erick having a great deal to do on his arrival, could not present himself to Helen.

She had been in quest of him, but had encountered Captain Lindsay, who addressed her more boldly than ever, and to

escape his persecutions she was compelled to return.

As evening came her anxiety increased, and she was in all the agony of expectation, when a message came from her lover.

It was brought by Rollo, who informed her that the sergeant had just arrived with his regiment, and wished to see her immediately.

"Where is he?" asked Helen. "Why does he not come to me, himself?"

"He would come, if he could," replied Rollo; "but he is busy with the men in St. Ann's-square. Come with me and I will take you to him."

Wholly unsuspicious of ill, Helen instantly prepared to accompany the messenger, and they quitted the house together.

The night was dark but clear, and, as they crossed the churchyard, she per-

ceived a tall Highland officer advancing towards her, and guessing who it was, she stopped, and said to Rollo, "What is Captain Lindsay doing here?"

"How should I know?" rejoined the other. "He won't meddle with us. Come on. I'll take care of you."

"I don't feel sure of that," she cried. "I shall go back."

"No, you won't," said Rollo, seizing her arm, and detaining her.

"Ah! you have basely betrayed me," she cried. "But Sergeant Dickson will punish you."

Rollo replied by a coarse laugh, and the next moment Captain Lindsay came up.

"Free me from this man," she cried.

"He is acting by my orders, Helen," said Lindsay. "This time I have taken such precautions that you cannot escape me."

"You cannot mean to carry me off

against my will, Captain Lindsay," she cried. "I winna believe it of ye."

"I hope you will come quietly, Helen," he said, "and not compel me to resort to force. But come you shall."

"Never!" she rejoined. "Ye ken fu' weel that I am Erick Dickson's affianced wife. 'Twad be an infamy if ye were to tae me frae him."

"I care not," replied Lindsay. "I am determined to make you mine. Fleet horses and trusty men are waiting outside the churchyard to bear you off. In half an hour you will be far from Manchester, and out of Erick's reach."

"If ye hae the heart o' a man, Rollo, ye will not aid in this wicked deed," cried Helen.

But Rollo shook his head, and she made another appeal to Captain Lindsay.

"Let me gae for pity's sake," she cried. "I wad kneel to you, if I could."

"No, no, Helen," he rejoined. "I don't mean to part with you. But we waste time. Bring her along."

Finding all entreaties unavailing, and that she could not extricate herself from Rollo, who was a very powerful man, the unfortunate girl uttered a loud shriek; but her cries were instantly stifled by Captain Lindsay, who took off his scarf, and threw it over her head.

But her cry had reached other ears than they expected. As they were hurrying her towards the spot where the horses were waiting for them, a well-known voice was heard, exclaiming:

"Haud there, ye waur than rievers. When I saw the horses outside the kirk-yard, and noticed that one on 'em had a pillion, I suspected something wrang; but when I heard the cry, I felt sure. Set her down, ye villains!" cried Sergeant Dickson, rushing towards them.

"Heed him not, Rollo," said Captain Lindsay. "Place her on the pillion and ride off with her. Leave me to deal with the noisy fool."

And, as he spoke, he drew his sword, planted himself in Dickson's way, while Rollo moved off with his burden.

"Ye had better not hinder me, captain," cried the half-maddened sergeant, drawing a pistol. "Bid that dastardly ruffian set her down at once, or I'll send a bullet through your head."

"You dare not," said Lindsay, contemptuously.

"I will not see her stolen from me," cried the sergeant, furiously. "Set her down, I say."

But finding his cries disregarded, he fired, and Captain Lindsay fell dead at his feet.

On hearing the report of the pistol, Rollo looked round, and seeing what had hap-

pened, instantly set down Helen and fled. Extricating herself from the scarf, Helen rushed towards the spot where the unfortunate officer was lying. Her lover was kneeling beside the body.

"Wae's me, Helen!" he exclaimed. "Wae's me, I hae kilt the captain."

"Ye canna be blamed for his death, Erick," she rejoined. "He brought his punishment on himsel."

"I shall die for it, nevertheless, lassie," he rejoined.

"Die! you die, Erick, for savin' me frae dishonour!" she cried.

"Ay, ay, lass. He was my superior officer, and by the rules of war I shall die. No escape for me."

"Oh! if you think sae, Erick, let us flee before ye can be taken," she cried. "Come wi' me."

"Na! na!" he rejoined, gently resisting her. "I maun answer for what I hae done. Leave me, lassie; gae back to the

young leddy. Tell her what has happened, and she will take care of you."

"Na, Erick, I winna leave you," she rejoined. "If ye are to dee, I'se e'en dee wi' ye. Och!" she exclaimed," here they come to tak ye! Get up, lad, and flee!"

As a file of soldiers could be seen approaching, the sergeant rose to his feet, but did not attempt to fly.

Immediately afterwards the soldiers came up. With them were two or three men bearing torches, and as these were held down, the unfortunate officer could be seen lying on his back, with his skull shattered by the bullet.

The sergeant averted his gaze from the ghastly spectacle.

The soldiers belonged to the Manchester Regiment, and at their head was Captain Dawson.

"How did this sad event occur, sergeant?" demanded Jemmy, after he had examined the body.

"Captain Lindsay fell by my hand," replied Dickson. "I surrender myself your prisoner, and am ready to answer for the deed."

"You must have done it in self-defence," said Jemmy. "I know you too well to suppose you could have committed such a crime without some strong motive."

"The deed was done in my rescue," cried Helen. "Captain Lindsay was carrying me off when he was shot."

"I trust that will save him from the consequences of the act," replied Jemmy, sadly. "My duty is to deliver him to the provost-marshal."

"That is all that I could desire," said the sergeant. "I ask no greater favour from you."

"Oh! let me gae wi' him—let me gae wi' him," cried Helen, distractedly. "I am the sad cause of it a'."

"Ye canna gang wi' me, lassie, unless

you compose yersel," said the sergeant, somewhat sternly.

"Dinna fear me — dinna fear me — I winna greet mair," she cried, controlling her emotion by a powerful effort.

"May she walk by my side to the guard-room, Captain Dawson?" asked the sergeant.

"She may," replied the other, adding to the men, "conduct the prisoner to the guard-room near the prince's quarters."

The sergeant was then deprived of his arms, and the pistol with which he had fired the fatal shot was picked up, and preserved as evidence against him.

As Erick and Helen were marched off in the midst of the guard, another file of men entered the churchyard, took up the body of the unfortunate Captain Lindsay, and conveyed it to the quarters of the commanding officer.

VII.

A COURT-MARTIAL.

DELIVERED over to the custody of the provost, the unfortunate Sergeant Dickson was placed in the guard-room near the prince's head-quarters, and a sentinel was stationed at the door. Helen was allowed to remain with him. The greatest sympathy was felt for the sergeant, for he was a universal favourite.

Full of anxiety, Captain Dawson sought an interview with the prince, who though engaged on business immediately received him.

Charles looked very grave.

"I am greatly distressed by what has happened," he said. "There is not a man in my whole army for whom I have a greater regard than Erick Dickson, but I fear his sentence will be death. However, I will do what I can for him. A court-martial shall be held immediately, and I have sent for Lord George Murray to preside over it, and we must wait the result of the investigation. As yet I cannot interfere."

As the prince had ordered that the examination should take place without delay, a court-martial was held in a room on the ground floor of the mansion occupied by his royal highness. Lord George Gordon presided, and with him were Lord Elcho, Lord Pitsligo, Colonel Townley, and the Chevalier de Johnstone; Captain Legh, Captain Deacon, Captain Dawson, and several other officers were likewise present.

The president occupied a raised chair at the head of the table, round which the others were seated. The room was only imperfectly lighted.

After a short deliberation, the prisoner was brought in by two soldiers, who stood on either side of him.

Bowing respectfully to the court, he drew himself up to his full height, and maintained a firm deportment throughout his examination.

"Sergeant Dickson," said Lord George Murray, in a stern and solemn voice, "you are charged with the dreadful crime of murder—aggravated in your instance, because your hand has been raised against your superior officer. If you have aught to state in mitigation of your offence, the court will listen to you."

"My lord," replied Dickson, firmly, "I confess myself guilty of the crime with which I am charged. I did shoot Captain

Lindsay, but perhaps the provocation I received, which roused me beyond all endurance, may be held as some extenuation of the offence. Nothing, I am well aware, can justify the act. My lord, I could not see the girl I love carried off before my eyes, and not demand her release. Captain Lindsay refused—mocked me—and I shot him. That is all I have to say."

Brief as was this address, it produced a most powerful effect. After a short deliberation by the court, Lord George thus addressed the prisoner:

"Sergeant Dickson, since you acknowledge your guilt, it is not necessary to pursue the examination, but before pronouncing sentence, the court desires to interrogate Helen Carnegie."

"She is without, my lord," replied the sergeant.

On the order of Lord George, Helen was then introduced, and as she was well known

to the president, and to every member of the council, the greatest sympathy was manifested for her.

She was very pale, and did not venture to look at the sergeant lest her composure should be shaken, but made a simple reverence to the president and the council.

"Sergeant Dickson has confessed his guilt, Helen," observed Lord George. "But we desire to have some information from your lips. How came you to meet Captain Lindsay in the churchyard?"

"I did na meet him, my lord," she replied, with indignation. "It was a base and dishonourable trick on his part. Little did I ken that he was lyin' in wait for me. Rollo Forbes brought me word that Erick wished me to come to him, and when I went forth into the kirkyard, Captain Lindsay seized me, and wad have carried me aff. He has long persecuted me wi' his addresses, but I ha' gien him nae

encouragement, and wad ha' shunned him if I could. A scarf was thrown over my head by the captain to stifle my cries, and had not Erick came to my rescue I should ha' been carried off. Captain Lindsay deserved his fate, and so all men will feel who prize their sweethearts. Erick was bound to defend me."

"His first duty was to observe the rules of war," remarked Lord George, sternly. "We are willing to believe your story, Helen, but we have no proof that you did not voluntarily meet Captain Lindsay."

"That fawse villain, Rollo, has fled, but there is a young leddy without, my lord —Miss Byrom—who will testify to the truth of my statement, if you will hear her."

"Let her come in," said the president.

Beppy Byrom was then introduced.

She was accompanied by her father, who remained near her during her brief examination.

Though looking very pale, Beppy was perfectly self-possessed, and quite confirmed Helen's statement that she had been lured from the house by a supposed message from the sergeant; adding emphatically:

"I am sure she would never have gone forth to meet Captain Lindsay, for I know she detested him."

"Ay, that I did!" exclaimed Helen, unable to control her feelings, and wholly unconscious that she was guilty of disrespect.

Lord George then ordered the court to be cleared, and Beppy and Dr. Byrom went out, but Helen, scarcely comprehending the order, did not move, till her arm was touched by the officer.

She then cast an agonised look at Erick, and would have flung herself into his arms if she had not been prevented.

As she went out, she turned to the judges and said.

"Be merciful to him, I pray you, my lords."

The court then deliberated for a short time, during which Lord George was earnestly addressed in a low tone both by Colonel Townley and the Chevalier de Johnstone, but his countenance remained very grave.

At last, amid profound silence, he addressed the prisoner in the following terms: "Sergeant Dickson, the court has taken into consideration your excellent character, and the strong provocation that impelled you to commit this desperate act, and which certainly mitigates the offence, and such is our pity for you, that, were it in our power we would pardon your offence, or at all events would visit it with a slight punishment; but we have no option—leniency on our part would be culpable. You have murdered an officer, and must die.. Sen-

VIII.

HELEN PLEADS IN VAIN.

IMMEDIATELY after the breaking up of the court, Lord George Gordon and the other members of the council waited upon the prince to acquaint him with their decision.

Though greatly pained, he thought they were right, and after some discussion they retired and left him alone.

But the prince was so much troubled, that though excessively fatigued he could not retire to rest, but continued to pace his chamber till past midnight, when Captain

Dawson entered and informed him that Miss Byrom earnestly craved an audience of him.

"She is not alone," added Jemmy. "Helen Carnegie is with her."

Charles hesitated for a short time, and said, "I would have avoided this, if possible. But let them come in."

Beppy was then ushered in by Jemmy, and made a profound obeisance to the prince.

Behind her stood Helen, who seemed quite overwhelmed with grief.

"I trust your highness will pardon me," said Beppy. "I have consented to accompany this poor heart-broken girl, and I am sure you will listen to her, and if possible grant her prayer."

"I will readily listen to what she has to say," replied the prince, in a compassionate tone; "but I can hold out little hope."

"Oh, do not say so, most gracious

prince!" cried Helen, springing forward, and catching his hand, while he averted his face. "For the love of Heaven have pity upon him! His death win be my death, for I canna survive him. Ye havena a mair leal subject nor a better sodger than Erick Dickson. Willingly wad he shed his heart's bluid for ye! Were he to dee, claymore in hand, for you, I should not lament him—but to dee the death o' a red-handed murtherer, is not fit for a brave man like Erick."

"I feel the force of all you say, Helen," replied Charles, sadly. "Erick is brave and loyal, and has served me well."

"Then show him mercy, sweet prince," she rejoined. "He is no murtherer—not he! Pit the case to yersel, prince. Wad ye hae seen the mistress o' yer heart carried off, and not hae slain the base villain who took her? I ken not."

"'Tis hard to tell what I might do,

Helen," observed Charles. "But the rules of war cannot be broken. A court-martial has been held, and has pronounced its sentence. I must not reverse it."

"But you are above the court-martial, prince," she cried. "You can change its decree. If any one is guilty—'tis I! Had I not come wi' Erick this wad never have happened. He has committed no other fawt."

"On the contrary, he has always done his duty—done it well," said the prince. "Both Colonel Johnstone and Colonel Townley have testified strongly in his favour. But I required no testimony, for I well know what he has done."

"And yet ye winna pardon him?" she cried, reproachfully.

"I cannot, Helen—I cannot," replied Charles. "My heart bleeds for you, but I must be firm."

"Think not you will set an ill example

by showing mercy in this instance, prince," she said. "Erick's worth and valour are known. Sae beloved is he, that were there time, hundreds of his comrades wad beg his life. If he be put to death for nae fawt, men win think he has been cruelly dealt with."

"You go too far, Helen," said the prince, compassionately. "But I do not blame your zeal."

"Pardon me, sweet prince—pardon me if I have said mair than I ought. My heart overflows, and I must gie vent to my feelings, or it will break. Oh! that I were able to touch your heart, prince!"

"You do touch it, Helen. Never did I feel greater difficulty in acting firmly than I do at this moment."

"Then yield to your feelings, prince—yield to them, I implore you," she cried, passionately. "Oh, madam!" she added

to Beppy, "join your prayers to mine, and perchance his highness may listen to us!"

Thus urged, Beppy knelt by Helen's side, and said, in an earnest voice:

"I would plead earnestly with you, prince, to spare Erick. By putting him to death you will deprive yourself of an excellent soldier, whose place you can ill supply."

"Very true," murmured Charles. "Very true."

"Then listen to the promptings of your own heart, which counsels you to spare him," she continued.

For a moment it seemed as if Charles was about to yield, but he remained firm, and raising her from her kneeling posture, said:

"This interview must not be prolonged."

Helen, however, would not rise, but clung to his knees, exclaiming, distractedly:

"Ye winna kill him! ye winna kill him!"

Jemmy removed her gently, and with Beppy's aid she was taken from the room.

END OF VOL. II.

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